

# WORLD PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS COMMEMORATION VOLUME

*Issued in Commemoration of  
The World Parliament of Religions  
Held at Sivanandanagar, Rishikesh,*

*In April, 1953,*

*As well as,*

*Of its Subsequent Anniversary Meetings,  
And of the Half-Yearly Sessions of  
The All-World Religions Federation  
Incepted in December 1945*



Sivanandanagar  
The Yoga-Vedanta Forest University  
Rishikesh, U P  
Himalayas

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*Om Sadguru Paramatmane Namah*

*Om*

*Dedicated to the Almighty Lord  
Ever the Same  
One and Eternal  
But Diverse in Manifestation  
And Peoples Perception*

*Dedicated to Thee Who Art  
The Summum Bonum of All Life  
The Ultimately Singular Goal for Everyone  
Thou Who Art Reached Through Diverse Paths  
As Rivers Mingle in Unison  
Losing Their Individuality in the Ocean of Oneness*

*Dedicated to All Seekers of Thine  
Everyone Everywhere  
Professing Many a Faith in Varied Ways  
And Also to All That Seek Thee Not  
But Are Destined to Reach Thy Abode  
At the End of Their Cycles of Evolution  
Propelled By Thy Grace and Benediction*

*Om*

## PUBLISHERS' NOTE

As the title indicates, the publication we now offer to the public was originally intended to exclusively commemorate the World Parliament of Religions which met at Rishikesh, on the 3rd, 4th and 5th of April, 1953. It was also supposed to contain only the proceedings of this religious parliament as well as some selected papers received for the occasion. As the compilation and the printing work went on, it was felt that, in spite of the obvious delay implied, it would be more appropriate if the publication adequately represented the central teachings of all the major religions of the world, besides the general religious topics. Thus articles that were not precisely connected with the World Parliament of Religions were allowed in and grouped under different sections. Among these were some of the speeches and papers connected with the various half-yearly sessions of the All-World Religions Federation, which was established by Sri Swami Sivananda Maharsi in December 1945, as well as of the subsequent anniversary meetings of the World Parliament of Religions. The main contents of this Volume are select contributions by eminent scholars on the distinctive features of the various religions, on the fundamental universality of religious tenets, on general spiritual values, as well as on a number of subjects pertinent to the main theme.

The Volume has been divided into seventeen chapters to which reports, greetings and good-wishes pertaining to the World Parliament of Religions have been appended. The first chapter entirely deals with the proceedings of this religious convention, and the second and the third discuss the universal principles of religion and the need for co-operating anch meetings to eschew all ecclesiastical animosities, transcend harmful differences and barriers, foster the spirit of brotherhood, goodwill and understanding, and to devise ways and means of giving the most useful effect to the basic religious ideals in the practical life of the individual and the masses. The following twelve chapters cover the eleven major religions of the world, some in a rather elaborate manner and the rest somewhat succinctly. Though Sullism is not an independent religion, distinct from Islam, a separate chapter was provided in order to emphasize its unique mystic outlook. Following these is the chapter on general contributions on the basic theme of religion and other allied matters. A few articles under this section, though they should have found place in the earlier sections dealing independently on different religions, had to be included since they were available just before the completion of the work. The last chapter deals on the religious approach of Sri Swami Sivananda Maharsi, which is rather an essay on the philosophy of the universal religion and its practical aspects, bearing on the evolution and the welfare of humanity, as lived by him.

We are grateful to all those who have helped us to convene the World Parliament of Religions and participated in its proceedings. We also offer our grateful thanks to those who have sent their contributions for publication in this volume, and to few of those whose articles appear herein, though they were originally intended for other occasions, and to each of those organizations co-coaxed therewith.

15th December, 1955  
Sivanandashram,  
Rishikesh, Himalayas

The Yoga-Vedanta Forest University



He has failed at follow of the basic tenets of all great religions and adharma is passing off spirit of  
religion HH Sri Swami Sannada need to be removed

## PRAYERS FROM THE VEDAS

योगे योगे तवस्तरं याजे याजे, इवामहै ।  
सखाय इन्द्रमूत्ये ॥

सं समिधुवसे वृषद्गते विश्वान्यर्थ आ ।  
इजस्पदे समिध्यसे स नो वस्त्व्या भर ॥

संगच्छाप्वं संवद्वचं रु वो मनांसि ज्ञानताम् ।  
देवा भागे यथा पूर्वे सआनाना, उपासते ॥

समानो मन्त्रः समितिः समानी समानं मनः ।  
सह चित्तमेवाम् ॥

समानी व अशृतिः समाना हृदयानि वः ।  
समानमस्तु वो मनो यथा वः सुसद्गासति ॥

सहदयं सौमनस्यमविद्वेष्य कुण्डोमि वः ।  
अन्यो अन्यमभिहृते ॥

मा भ्राता भ्रातरं द्वित्तन्मा स्वसारमुत खसा ।  
सम्यज्ञः सवता भूत्वा वाचं वदत भद्रया ॥

येन देवा न वियन्ति नो च विद्विषते मियः ।  
तद्गृह्यमो ब्रह्म वौ गृहे संज्ञानं पुर्सैभ्यः ॥

सम्यज्ञोऽनिन्द तपदंतारा नाभिमिवाभितः ॥

सधाचीनान्वः संमनस्त्वृणोग्येकेष्वनुप्तोन्यवननेन गत्वान् ।  
देवा इवामृतं रचमाणा, सायशात्, सौमनसो वो अस्तु ॥

सं वः पृथ्यन्तं तन्यः सं मनांसि समुद्रता ।  
सं बोऽयं वदाणस्पतिर्भिर्गः सं वो अजीगमत् ॥

# A Collection of Prayers of World's Religions

## HINDUISM

In the beginning of creation there was one God, the source of all lights. He was the only Lord of all created beings. He upholds both the earth and heaven. To Him we offer our prayers.

He is the giver of spiritual knowledge. He is the giver of strength. Through all the world worshippers end by His command wise men obey. His shelter is immortality. His shadow is death. To Him we shall offer our prayers.

His own greatness has made Him the sole king of all movable and immovable world. He is the Creator and Lord of all men and beasts. It is to that Lord we shall offer our prayers.

To Thee, O dispeller of all darkness, we offer our prayers with our minds and approach Thee every day, by day and by night.

Let us meditate on the excellent glory of that Divine Being who illuminates everything. May He guide our understanding.

(Rig Veda)

O Thou Glorious Lord, O Protector of vows, I am determined to master my lower self. Bestow on me the required strength and make my effort fruitful. Through Thy grace, leaving unrighteousness, may I realize the Truth.

I worship Thee, O sweet Lord of transcendental vision, O giver of prosperity to all! May I be free from the bonds of death, like the ripe fruit falling from the tree. May I never again forget my immortal nature.

O Lord! Who blesses all creatures by revealing the Vedas, desirous to make us happy by Thy calm and blissful Self, which roots out terror as well as sin.

Salutations to Thee! O Destroyer of the cycle of births and deaths. O Lord of the universe, adorations to Thee.

O Lord! Thou art beyond the sea of Samsara. -Thou existest in its midst also. Thou easieth one to go beyond sin by means of the sacred Mantras. Thou taketh one beyond death through knowledge! I bow to Thee. Thou art present in sacred flowing streams as well as on the blossomed. Thou art in the tender grass on the seashore as well as to the foaming waves; I bow to Thee.

May I be able to look upon all creatures with the eye of a friend. May we look upon one another with the eye of a friend.

O Lord! Thou art infinite energy. Do Thou fill me with energy. Thou art infinite virility. Do Thou fill me with virility. Thou art infinite strength. Do Thou bestow on me great strength. Thou art infinite power. Do Thou grant us power. Thou art infinite courage. Do Thou make me courageous. Thou art infinite fortitude. Do Thou fill me with fortitude.

O Lord! Thou art our father. Do Thou instruct us like a father. Our prostrations unto Thee. Do not forsake us. Do Thou protect us for ever.

Whatever sins have been committed by me, in thought, word, or deed, may the Supreme Lord, the source of all strength, wisdom and purity, forgive me and purify me at them all.

May my body become pure. May I be free from Impurity and sin. May I realize myself as the light divine. May my mind become ever pure. May my self become pure. May I realize myself as the light divine.

May we meet together; let our minds apprehend alike; common be our prayer; common be our assembly's aim; common be our purpose; common be our desires; united be our hearts; united be our intentio, so that there may be a thorough union among all of us. May our Father grant this.

(Yajur Veda)

Let us meditate on the glory and splendour of that Supreme Being, who illuminates everything. May He guide us in all our actions. May He grant us a clear understanding and pure intellect.

Let there be peace to heaven; let there be peace to the atmosphere; may peace fill the four quarters; may the waters and

medicinal herbs bring peace; may planets give peace to all beings; may all enlightened persons disseminate peace to all beings; may the Vedas spread peace everywhere; may all other objects everywhere give us peace; and may that peace come to us and remain with us for ever.

(Yajur Veda)



## JUDAISM

Hear, O Israel,\* the Lord is One. The Lord is our God.

May It be Thy Will, O Lord and God of our fathers, to make us walk in Thy law and stick to Thy commandments; and lead us away from sin, trespasses, temptation and hatred. Remove from us every evil desire and make us adhere to the good.

O Lord, bestow on us Thy grace, favour and mercy in Thy sight and in the sight of

all that behold us; end grant gracious favours on us at all times. Glory unto Thee, O Lord, who bestowest gracious favours on Thy people Israel. Amen.

Lead me, O Lord, in Thy righteousness. Make Thy Way straight before my face. Cleanse Thou me from secret faults. Keep back Thy servant from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

\*Israel means those who righteously tread the path of God, and His laws.

Search me, O God, and know my heart,  
try me and know my thoughts, and see if  
there be any wicked way in me; and lead  
me in the Way Everlasting

Show me Thy Ways, O Lord! Teach me  
Thy Paths, and lead me in Thy Truth, Thou

art the God of my Salvation Open The  
mine eyes that I may behold wondrous  
things out of Thy Law Unto me according  
to Thy Word Remove from me  
the way of lying

## JAINISM

Salutations to the Lord, the Destroyer  
of enemies, the Supreme Ruler, the King of  
those who have attained success

Look with a steady gaze with affection  
the Lord of the winners, adore the adapt in  
all your actions. Salutations to the Master  
of him who has reached the other shore of  
immortality, to the Highest of great emi-  
nence, to Him who is above destruction, to  
Him without any defect Salutations unto  
Him who is free from old age, the Immortal  
the Wonderful, the Immeasurable Treasure

Adoration to the Perfect Lord, full of  
sweetness of worship His feet with my  
head with great zeal and enthusiasm I ever  
salute Him with folded hands Salutations  
to Thee the Adept, the illumined, the  
Good amongst all people in the world, the  
Shining One, the Joy of all eyes Saluta-  
tions to the Chief of all Devas and Asuras  
and the Great who serve Him day and  
night Adoration to Thee, the Tirthankara  
the Bestower of Bliss the Teacher the

Brother who serves without any motives. I  
adore Thee who foogeth for the good of  
the world, entangled and those who take  
refuge in Thee, who art the Ocean of the  
waters of mercy. Salutations to Thee, who  
art seen in the glasa of knowledge, whose  
nature is both light and darkness Saluta-  
tions to Thee who removeth the taints of all  
stns and misery, and who driveth away all  
sense of harassment Adoration to Thee  
who art meditated upon by the world  
as the World Teacher, the Joy of the  
world, the Lord of the world and of its  
people Salutations to Thee who helpeth us  
to cross the terrible and endless ocean of  
worldly life the guide on the way to the  
City of Bliss Salutations to Thee, the  
refuge of the refugeless, unattached, be-  
yond all limitations, formless the Lord of  
the world. Salutations to Thee, the Enlight-  
ener of the meek the matchless, the Lord  
of mercy and charity, the pure the Highest  
knowledge and the Ruler in the Devas

## ZOROASTRIANISM

Blessed indeed was the thought, blessed  
the world and blessed the deed of the Holy  
Zerathshtrs The celestial Spirits carried  
forth the scriptures Glory to you O Holy  
Scriptures!

Saluting Thee, O Mazda, we desire Thy  
gift of gracious help We stretch our hands  
unto Thee and pray for the grace of Thy  
beautiful spiritual spirit We beg of Thee

that our actions unto all may be done in  
the spirit of righteousness and virtue and  
with this we may do reverence to the Son  
of the Ktes

We remember the Holy Ahunavad Gatha  
reverently He is the Chief of Purity  
We reverently remember His prayer

We adore the Ha called Ysshkeothnam  
We worship the Holy Ahunavad Gatha

who is the Lord of Purity. We worship the holy prayer of Ahunavad Gatha. We glorify such men and women whom Ahura Mazda recognizes as great in worship and purity.

Purity is the best gift. Happiness is to him who is pure for the sake of purity

Fix we our minds in worship on the Lord, of Right and Might, of Wisdom and of Power, who gives us Conscience to do godly deeds. And also gives detachment from the world, and patient resignation whence we gain solace in time of weakness and of pain

Grant me long life, Lord Mazda, fortitude and the right mind; and show me the Straight Path, over which Thou broodest, and which leads to Thee. Lord, give me such a mind as makes men wise and dutiful;

the wealth of rectitude, from which all other wealth flows of itself, and conscience just, and patient fortitude, and right activity, bestow on me. Come unto me, O great Mazda, with Thy hands full of those duties, righteous words and deeds, which bring spirituality, detached aloofness from the world, and salvation thence.

Right thoughts, right words and right deeds—by these we gain Knowledge of Mazda, and thence of Brhm; the straight Path that the loving Lord Soshyant gave us—may we never err from it.

May this my mind, Lord Mazds, show to me the Truth, Thy inmost Spirit, greatest Good, ideal of ideals, to guide me aright in ways of Righteousness always. Having achieved that goal I will have gained all lesser things, to which my soul inclines.

## BUDDHISM

Glory be to the Lord, the Holy Being, perfect in knowledge; glory be to the Lord, the Holy Being, perfect in knowledge; glory be to the Lord, the Holy Being, perfect in knowledge.

I go to the Buddha (Enlightened) for refuge; I go to the Law for refuge; I go to the Brotherhood for refuge.

For the second time, I go to the Buddha for refuge, for the second time, I go to the Law for refuge, for the second time, I go to the Brotherhood for refuge.

For the third time, I go to the Buddha for refuge; for the third time, I go to the Law for refuge; for the third time, I go to the Brotherhood for refuge

I promise to abstain from taking the life of any living creature. I promise to abstain from taking anything with thievish intention. I promise to abstain from the evil tendency of badly passions. I promise to abstain from falsehood, I promise to abstain from any intoxicating liquor or drug.

## CHRISTIANITY

O Almighty Lord, unto Thee all hearts are open. Unto Thee all desires are known and from Thee nothing is hidden; make pure the thoughts of ours by the inspira-

tion of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly and wholeheartedly love Thee, and duly glorify Thy Holy Name. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

O Lord Christ! We, Thy obedient faithful and humble servants, dedicate this new-born day to Thee, praying that it may shine in Thy service as a pure gem in the chaplet of our life. O Thou Great King of love and mercy, Thee we adore and revere ever and for ever. Amen.

To the Most Holy and Adorable Trinity— Father, Son and Holy Spirit—three persons in one God; to Christ, our only Lord and Guide, the Prince of Peace; to the seven mighty spirits before the throne; and to the religious assemblage of just men who have attained perfection, the saints, the holy ones, be unceasing prayer from every

living creature; and honour and glory for ever. Amen.

Teach us, O Lord, to see Thy life in all men and in all creatures of Thine earth and guide our nation through its leaders to preserve Thy peace, that the menace of war be far from our country. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The peace of God passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His son, Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God, Almighty the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always. Amen.

## ISLAM

In the name of the Lord, the Kind, the Compassionate. All honour be to God, Lord of all the worlds. The Kind and the Compassionate, the King on the day of faith. It is He who is Wise, He who is Powerful. Guide Thou us on the Path of Righteousness. The Path of those who rejoice in Thee. Not on that of those who ignore Thee and work injustice. Amen.

Praise be unto the Lord of all the worlds! O Lord of Mercy and Beneficence! Master Supreme of the great judgment day! Thou do we search, and Thas beseech for help: show us the Path on which Thy blessings last, the Straight Path, not of those who go astray, on whom descends Thy wrath and punishment!

## SIKHISM

The One Supreme Lord, whose name is the Eternal Truth, the Creator, the Spirit, free from all fear and anxiety, Immortal, Birthless, the Self-existent, the Enlightener, the Bestower of Grace. Glory be to Him.

The Pure One was in the beginning, before all ages began, the Pure One exists now, and, says Nanak, shall exist for ever.

Praise be to the Guru!

The Eternel is my Father Measuring,

my Goddess-Mother is Eternity. My Teacher is my Mind the intuition is my good nurse They teach me to do right. Thou blessed Consort-Nature of the Lord! Grant me this boon that I may never turn from the right path of Duty, never fear the war against evil, and may always win. I fold my hands to humble prayer to Thee! I bend my head in lowly reverence! Ordain that Thy Path may be trod by all! Give me the strength to make it plain to meet

# Universal Prayers

(The following four Prayers are by Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. The first one was written about nine years ago and is since then recited at the daily prayer meetings at the headquarters of the Divine Life Society and its numerous branches all over the world. The second, third and fourth Prayers were written nearly twenty years ago)

## I

O adorable Lord of Mercy and Love !  
Salutations and prostrations unto Thee.  
Thou art omnipresent, omnipotent,  
omniscient.  
Thou art Existence, Knowledge, Bliss  
Absolute.  
Thou art the Indweller of all beings.  
Grant us an understanding heart,  
Equal vision, balanced mind,  
Faith, devotion and wisdom.  
Grant us inner spiritual strength  
To resist temptations and to control the  
mind.  
Free us from egoism, lust, greed and hatred.  
Fill our hearts with divine virtues.  
Let us behold Thee in all the names and  
forms.  
Let us serve Thee in all the names and  
forms.  
Let us ever remember Thee.  
Let us ever sing Thy glories  
Let Thy Name be ever on our lips  
Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever.

## II

Thou art O Lord, the Creator of this  
universe. Thou art the Protector of this  
world. Thou art in the grass and in the  
rose. Thou art in the sun and in the stars.  
Salutations unto Thee, O Bestower of joy  
and bliss!

Sweet Lord! Let me be free from the  
clutches of birth and death. Let me be able  
to look upon all beings with equal vision.  
Let me be free from impurity and sin. Give  
me strength to control the mind. Give me  
strength to serve Thee and the humanity

untiringly. Make me Thy fit instrument  
for Thy work. Make me pure and strong

I bow to Thee, O Indweller of all hearts.  
O Secret of secrets! Remove my weak-  
nesses, defects and evil thoughts. Make  
me pure so that I may be able to receive  
Thy grace and blessings. O Lord! Thou  
art the thread-soul that connects all beings.  
Thou pervadest all, permeatest and inter-  
penetrates all that exists in this universe.

Thou art Light Divine. Thou art the  
dispeller of ignorance. Thou art the All-  
merciful Lord. Give me a life without  
disease. Let me remember Thee always.  
Let me develop all the sublime virtues

Thou art self-luminous. Thou art my  
father, mother, brother, friend, relative and  
guide. Let me realize the Truth. Let me be  
free from greed, lust, egoism, jealousy and  
hatred. Prepare me as Thy sweet messenger  
on this earth so that I may radiate joy,  
peace and bliss to the whole world. Let me  
utilize my body, mind and senses in Thy  
service and in the service of Thy creatures.  
Breathe into me Thy breath of Immortality.  
Let me recognize the Universal Brother-  
hood of Man. Let me love all as my own  
Self. Salutations unto Thee, O Lord of  
Compassion.

## III

O Omnipresent Lord! Adorations unto  
Thee. Give me strength to control the  
mind and to serve Thee and humanity,  
untiringly, with great zeal and enthusiasm.  
Make me a fit instrument for Thy work.

O Loving Preserver! Remove my weak-  
nesses, defects and evil thoughts. Make

me pure so that I may be able to receive  
Thy light, grace and blessings.

O Lodwelling Preseoce! Give me a life  
without disease. Let me remember Thee  
always. Let me forget the sensual pleasures.  
Let me have the company of sages  
and saints. Let me be endowed with  
dispassion, discrimination and sublime  
virtues.

O Omiscient Inner Ruler! Prepare me  
as Thy sweet messenger on this earth so  
that I may radiate joy, peace and bliss, to  
the whole world. Let this body, mind and  
senses, be utilized in Thy service and the  
service of humanity.

O All-merciful Lord! Let me be con-  
scious of my real divine nature. Let me  
express my divine nature, and divine  
qualities in my daily actions. Let me  
become a living presence here.

O Omnipotent Power! Breathes unto me  
Thy breath of Immortality. Let me drink  
the divine nectar. Lift me up into the  
highest realm of supreme peace, eternal  
bliss and divine splendour. Make me  
dwell in Thee for ever. Salutations unto  
Thee, O Lord of compassion!

#### IV

O Antaryemic, Lodweller of our hearts!  
Friend of the poor, protector of the for-  
saken, parifier of the fallen (Patitipavane),  
forgive our sins. Have mercy on us. Show  
us the smooth way, a royal road for attain-  
ing the supreme shade of peace. Open our  
inner eye of wisdom, the eye of intuition  
as Thou once didst for Arjuna—Thy friend  
and devotee. Throw a flood of light in our  
spiritual path. Bless us and lighten the  
load of our mundane life in this Mrityu-  
loka.

O Blessed Lord! All-pervading Truth!  
Divine effulgence! Remove not hard-  
boiled, fast, wrath, greed, pride, arrogance  
and Mohs (infatuated love for wife, child-  
ren, property and body or material)

Cleanse us. Remould us. Make us pure.  
Give us spiritual strength to attain success  
in Yoga.

May we surely cross over the ocean of  
our sin—our terrible enemy—heing puri-  
fied by Thy divine and everlasting grace!  
When Thy feet shed their grace on man,  
he gets rid of all his evils—those blessed  
feet, the threshold of the (cosmical) world,  
the ever-luminous, the pure, the brilliant,  
the ever-shining and effulgent, that pro-  
fusely pour their choicest showers of am-  
brosia in diverse ways to the universe;  
may they strengthen and consolidate our  
possessing of sound knowledge and right-  
eous conduct on earth.

We bow to Thee, O Lodweller of our  
heavenly! Thy tenchiogs constitute the Holy  
Vedas; nothing can exist without Thee.  
The whole universe is Thy body. Thou art  
the light of knowledge. Thou art the  
supreme Guru, and through Thy grace, may  
we realize the Truth.

O Lord, the giver of bliss, give us  
wisdom. Remove all our had tendencies.  
Take us under Thy kind shelter so that  
we may become virtuous. May we all  
become Brahmacharins and Sadacharins.  
May we become the protectors of virtue  
and celibacy.

Salutations to Thee, the Supreme Lord.  
Thou art the Creator of this universe. Re-  
move the afflictions and miseries of all.  
Bestow on us the power, courage and  
strength. Thou art the protector of all  
humanity. Thou art the bestower of peace  
and bliss. Make everyone happy and  
cheerful. Thou penetrates all in this  
universe. Thou cleansest the minds of  
all impurities. Let us behold the one Self  
in all. Grant us peace and immortality.  
May there be welfare to the whole uni-  
verse. May all devote themselves in doing  
good to others. May all evil subsides. May  
the world be happy in all ways!

Inaugural Message by the Chief Convenor

## AWAKEN THE RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS !

Sri Swami Sivananda

Religious disharmony is a misnomer. Religion unites people's hearts. No true follower of any religion will ever condemn other religions. He will, on the contrary, promote goodwill and understanding, peace and harmony.

What creates disharmony is the irreligious-part of man, the animal-in-man. It is greed, lust, selfishness and egotism. They generate fear, fear leads to wars. None of the religions of the world sanctions these bestial qualities.

We are living in a new world. We are living in the Atomic Age. An immediate change of heart is inevitable. The strongest bond of love must unite the hearts of all. Bestial passions must be banished. This can be achieved only by the practice of religion.

The second factor that creates disharmony is intellectual gnostics. The true follower of any religion will busy himself with practising its tenets. He is conscious of only the need to perfect himself. But the mere intellect is fond of creating newer and newer theories and therefore greater and greater divisions. Intellect should yield place to heart; practice should take precedence over theory.

The Parliament meets at a time when the whole world should realize that peace can be had only through the diligent practice of religion by every man and woman. This is truly an epoch-making event in the history of the world, for it will awaken man to the real glory of his own religion and will place before him the practical teachings of his own religion. The success of the Parliament is the assurance of world peace. May the Almighty crown its deliberations with glorious success!

Hia gocius lies in his discovery of the simple and the easy Path to the Supreme Goal, which any one can tread, whtchever walk of life he may choose.

### Inspirlog Teachings

Swami Sivananda does not advise his disciples and followers to entirely isolate themselves, for entering into Samadhi or communion with God, but to immunize their mind to the earth-earthly currents of pleasure and pain, like and dislike. He advises them to go out into the world, live in society with a disciplined mind, and, above all serve their fellow-beings in a spirit of selfless, egoless and desireless worship of the all-pervading Divinity.

### His Divine Missioo

Swamiji has himself illustrated the kind of service that they can render by his own epochal dynamic spiritual awakening Tour of India and Ceylon in 1950, when he thundered forth his stirring message of eternal wisdom throughout the length and breadth of the land. The ocean of human heads that rose around him, the reverence with which Maharajas and political chiefs greeted him, the devout veneration with which philosophers and leaders of society welcomed him everywhere—in short, the spontaneous love and regard with which the whole nation rose as one man to welcome him, to worship him and to hear him, proved the glory of Self-realization and dynamic sainthood, the thirst of mankind for the healing message of the Spirit, and the immeasurable field that lay before Sannyasins and spiritual leaders to serve humanity. Millions in India had the opportunity of knowing the glorious Saint in person. From the highest to the lowest rungs of social and spiritual ladder, men, women and children all over the coun-

try thronged to see and hear the champion of social and spiritual service. His words were embedded in the heart of the listeners; his gestures were entralling; and his innocent love-filled look and the flowing robes kept the people's thoughts engaged throughout. He is a powerful orator who can thrill and electrify the audience.

Undoubtedly, this power he has obtained through his highly manifest soul-force developed through the cultivation to a remarkable degree of the aterior qualities of head and heart, viz., spontaneous and unrestrained love, nobility, intuition, humility, mercy, patience and self-sacrifice. His unbounded love can be yours for the mere asking and his help and guidance you can command by showing the least inclination to tread the spiritual path. Swamiji abhors not the sinner; he loathes not the vicious; nor does he brush aside the criminal. For each he prays; to each he pays full-visional attention till a wholesome change in the person's mentality is achieved.

Of no less significance has been Swami Sivacende's imperceptible service in the higher spiritual planes, where through his mysterious spiritual powers he has worked wonders and performed miracles transforming the very nature of men, shaping the very destinies of numerous people, mysteriously freeing them from their material and spiritual woes, and showering upon them peace, plenty and prosperity.

Millions all over the world have discovered the object of their quest, in him; and they have all derived incalculable benefit in their physical, mental, moral and spiritual regeneration. The world is infinitely better today, for his services, than it would otherwise have been.

Sri Swami Venkatesananda

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# Swami Sivananda Who Convened the Parliament of Religions

## A Composite Personality

Swami Sivananda is not only a sage, Yogi, philosopher, author and orator, but also a poet, artist, humorist, singer and musician. His poems in English belong to a class of their own. He sings melodious songs in Hindi, Sanskrit and English with a charming celestial voice which must be heard to be believed.

As a child innocent and pleasing, as a friend cordial and sympathetic, as a doctor successful and benevolent, and above all, as a Saecoyable noble and sublime, Swami Sivaeada stands as a beacon-light amidst the billowing 'oceans' of humanity.

The fertility of Swami Sivaeada's brain, the lucidity of his expression, the sweetness of his voice, the boldness of his spirit, the simplicity of his appearance, the allusion in his voice, the magnanimity of his service, the popularity of his educational works, the glorious work at Ananda Kutir, the Forest University, the Ayurvedic Pharmacy, the Literature Department, Charitable Hospital and the School are all different shades of his unique personality. He is a dynamic personality of the present age endowed with diverse faculties of the head and the heart. He is a man of practical wisdom capable of guiding the destitutes of nations. His indomitable courage, iron tenacity of purpose and illustrious character make him a great soul, unique in all respects. He is a most enchanting and arresting personality.

## His Institution

The Sivanesha Ashram's atmosphere breathes the idea of the essential unity of

all religions. To be in Swami Sivananda's presence is in itself a blessing. The spiritual aura brings that wonderful peace and happiness which cannot be had elsewhere in the world. The Swami sheds wide power and love to all who come within his surroundings.

The moment people enter the gates of Ananda Kutir, the headquarters of the world-wide Divine Life Society, and the seat of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University, they entirely forget the differences of opinions, party-feelings and miseries of the world. The Divine Atmosphere creates joy and thrill in all aspirants. The sacred environment where every ripple of the Ganga, every gush of the forest wind and the very soil of the Himalayas thrill one with secret spiritual vibrations, is beyond description. The special attention of the Swami, his kind regards and uniform and artless courtesy bestowed on all visitors turn every man into a divine being. The visitors cherish with joy and gratitude the happy memory of God-intoxication.

## Sivanesha's Religion

Swami Sivanesha's religion, the religion of the heart, which he has significantly termed "Divine Life" is not the cave-dweller's conceit, nor the monopoly of monks. It is for all. Swamiji tells each one of us how to transform our daily life into divine life and how through regular, fruitful, dynamic activity, everyone can expand the heart to infinite dimensions to enable it to hold and be filled with Divinity or Self-realization, that is the goal of all.

To him religion is not mere 'meditation'—something airy and fairy, something which we may practise only in shrines and temples. To him religion is the daily demonstration of our spiritual beliefs from hour to hour, indeed from moment to moment, in our dealings with one and all, here and now, in this very work-a-day world. His attitude to life and the personal example he sets before all naturally satisfy the educated, the rationalist, the modern men and women, in all of whom his sage teachings and Yogic power evoke a sense of living adoration.

Swami Sivananda has been a source of spiritual inspiration to millions of men and women in various countries, irrespective of colour, creed and race. With a special knowledge of all religions, he talks on the essential unity of religions with convincing persuasiveness. He has scholarship which is happily combined with understanding; he wields a facile pen and possesses fiery eloquence to give expression to his views. His explanations of social and metaphysical problems and their solutions are clear and they carry conviction with all, even with those saturated with modern scientific education and materialistic culture. His constant endeavours in the field of dissemination of spiritual knowledge are the expressions of profound conviction that is rooted in his very soul that modern man can be saved only by an inner spiritual awakening, and that the realization of the highest peace and happiness is possible only by ceaseless service of Man. His Message is that Love of God is Service of Man. This is for him not a mere theoretical concept to be preached but a matter of daily practice—every moment of everyone's life.

And, having realized the great importance of social service and of the great role

that the carefree Sannyasin (monk) can play in bringing about the much needed spiritual awakening of the masses, Swamiji has lost no time in creating an institution of Sannyasins belonging to various faiths and enjoining upon them the sacred duty of organizing and preparing themselves for the service of mankind.

### Impressive Writings

There is no subject in Hindu religion and Philosophy which the Swamiji has not expounded for the easy understanding of all. His writings are an indispensable guide to all those who tread the spiritual path.

The simple, fascinating, calm and forceful style of Swami Sivananda has brought about a wonderful change in the readers. He is that rare fusion of intellectual giant and spiritual angel. Many spiritual gurus of India cannot be understood and so they cannot find response in the material world of the Occident; but Swami Sivananda writes with both spiritual depth and intellectual persuasion. He practices what he preaches, just what the country and the world need today. His teachings warm up the hearts of countless people and give them a new hope. He himself comes down to the level of the Sadhaka and then gradually takes him up to the higher level. He finds out the aspiration of each. He combines in himself the wisdom of a Jnani and the zest for assisting human beings at all psychological levels—that is the hallmark of a true selfless social leader (Karma Yogi).

The difficulties we feel in our day-to-day life, as well as in our spiritual practices, vanish when we turn to his hope-radiating precepts which are not at all irksome to follow. He does not advocate the orthodox tight-rope-walking Sadhanas nor does he place before his disciples the proverbial "razor's edge" to walk over.

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ॐ श्रीगणेशाय नमः

ॐ श्रीसद्गुरुपरमात्मनेनमः

Chapter One

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

# *Blessings for the World Parliament of Religions*

SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA

We are all assembled here to establish the Parliament of Religions in our own heart, to cultivate divine virtues, and to see the One Self in all. We should melt all illusory differences and feel that one God dwells in all beings.

Life without religion is a dreary waste and death. Without religion there is no morality, no spirituality; education without religion is not worth the name.

There is only one religion and that is the religion of Love, the religion of faith, the religion of Consciousness. Truth is One, sages call It variously. It should be realised by becoming practical seekers not by mere study or learning or lecturing. You should become spiritual heroes by actually practising religion in your daily life, by practising Japa and Kirtan every day, by selfless service and Sadhana. 'BE GOOD DO GOOD'—these four words sum up the essences of all religions teachings.

1

## *The Historical Background*

SRI SWAMI SADANAND

Unlike the previous Parliaments of Religions, a history of which has been given elsewhere in this book, this Parliament was not held in response to the desire of religious heads or organisations to establish a unity of religions or a common basis of understanding among them. It was the outcome of the overflowing love of a single person who has come into the world only for the purpose of serving man kind. That holy personage is Swami Sivananda Maharaj, the saint of the Himalayas, the Founder President of the Divine Life Society, which has innumerable branches in India and abroad, whose zeal for the cause of spiritual awakening has won for him the admiration and respect of tens of thousands of pious men and women scattered all over the globe. It is only in the fitness of things therefore that we should form a proper estimate of the man have a true understanding of the present time and realise the purpose with which Divine Providence has brought about this Parliament of Religions.

### THE MAN

Before he took up the order of Sannyas, Swami Sivananda was a Madras doctor practising in Malaya, devoting most of his time to freely serving the needs of the poorest of patients the labouring classes. His natural love of the medical sciences made him do research work in that direction and he was contributing valuable articles to medical journals. It was then that the deeper problems of man came to engage his thoughts and he decided to renounce the world and wander about in search of God and Truth. On the 4th of January, 1924, he was initiated in the order of Paramahansa Sannyasins. For years he went through rigorous penance and disciplined himself so as to become a fit servant of the Lord competent to carry out any orders he might receive from him.

He founded the Divine Life Society in 1936 for the dissemination of spiritual knowledge far and wide. The very idea of 'Divine Life' which Swami Sivananda formed in his mind

gives us a glimpse of the serious problems that were engaging his attention and the solution that suggested itself to him. The interval of time between the first world war and the second was, as we all know, one of tremendous upheaval, political, social and economic everywhere. The outstanding characteristic in the life of Europe and America was an attitude of contempt for long established traditions, conventions and beliefs—a rejection of ancient faiths and even institutions—and an unholy, impassioned pursuit of self and power. The disquietude that followed the termination of the first world war brought up to the surface the animal qualities long lying dormant in the human breast and everywhere the beast in man began to assert itself and sweep away humane impulses. Men lost their faith in democracy and followed blind fold Hitler, Mussolini and Franco, the apostles of vulgar dictatorship. Russia under ruthless Stalin became the seething cauldron of totalitarianism and irreverence, blasphemy and profanity reigned supreme. Licentiousness went to the length of reducing a holy matrimonial bond to the level of mere

animal affinity superseded by the dictatorial interests of the State. All these were the outbursts of long restrained bestial depravity.

#### THE TEMPO OF SILENT REFORM

Our Swamiji's highly sensitive mind became greatly agitated. He asked within himself what one sincere and ardent lover of goodness could do to counteract the vehement onset of advancing demonical forces of ungodliness. He was not unnerved by the continuing tales of triumph that Nazism, Fascism and Bolshevism were enjoying year after year. He knew that he had in his possession the secret of enduring success. The secret consisted in invoking the aid of God which is ever available when the cause is righteous. He therefore switched himself on to the Divine, both within him and without and after having tasted the nectar of such divine communion became filled with a

passion to share it with everyone in the world.

That was why he started the Divine Life Society. His one aim was to make every human being realise that he or she should not seek happiness in animal existence—where lust and greed hold sway—but should seek for it and secure it in a life divine here on this earth. He wanted to make it unmistakably clear to everyone that短暂 or enduring Peace and Happiness can be had only by the steady practice of the divine qualities—the *Dharma Sampat* mentioned in the Gita.

Nay, more Our Swamiji knows that the greater is the strength that the forces of good will secure from us and correspondingly the forces of evil will steadily become weaker and weaker.

This work of silent reform that Swami Sivananda started in 1936 has had increasing results. There are now branches of the Divine Life Society all over the world and there is a unity of purpose with which all members and sympathisers—wherever they may be—are working. The time has come for the keeping of the fruits of the last eighteen years of intense and steady work.

#### THE TIME

Let us now examine the condition of the world at the present moment. The dictators are dead and gone but the demons that they had released from hell are still hestridding the earth. England especially after the last world war, is passing through a phase of mental and spiritual languor. She cannot forget that till yesterday she enjoyed the proud privilege of being the moralist of the world and that all nations listened to her words of command with 'hated breath' and bended knees'. She now sees her erstwhile co-worker and comrade, America, developing herself into a nation of fabulous prosperity and ever increasing enterprises but plagued by legions of over wrought neurotics with abnormal sensitivities over eager for mental and physical titillations. An

excessive accumulation of material wealth and concentration of destructive strength have combined to turn the heads of American statesmen who are impatient to endure the intellectual strain involved in listening to counsels of sanity wherever they may come from. England feels too helpless either to better her own condition or to influence the power intoxicated inhabitants of America and Russia. In case these two rivals dash against each other in blind fury what can the smaller European States do? They are thirsty for the cooling and quenching draught of Peace. They seek for it everywhere but in vain.

The too few wise men who judge correctly find it impossible to persuade the men in power—who alone guide or misguide the destinies of nations. Certain it is that prayers are going forth from many a pure heart all over the world for better days. It is not everyone that has reached the spiritual stage when he or she prays for the welfare of the world. But everyone in distress asks for his or her own betterment. These prayers also will be heard—for no prayer goes in vain. Every little child that wants more bread or more milk or sugar and cannot get it on account of the famished conditions of existence in ration ruled countries makes its mother miserable at every meal time and the poor parent voices forth a prayer in distress begging for the dawn of better days. Can the merciful Almighty remain deaf to such appeals?

The cumulative effect of all such

prayers is bound to be immense. The politician or statesmen may have a parched up heart and may keep himself blind and indifferent to human suffering. But the voice of the people is the voice of God—and no State can endure long if it ignores public opinion. The man in the street may not have book learning or scientific training. But he has eyes to see ears to hear and a brain to judge. He knows what happens elsewhere. He reads the newspapers, listens to the radio and knows that India enjoys peace and security as compared

with Europe that India, though materially poor, is the land of spirituality—the land of sages and seers, of holy men who can be of great spiritual value to the entire world, if they set their hearts upon it. The average introvert westerner, therefore, has already turned his gaze to the East for a solution of all western problems.



The Inspire

tal stage when he or she prays for the welfare of the world. But everyone in distress asks for his or her own betterment. These prayers also will be heard—for no prayer goes in vain. Every little child that wants more bread or more milk or sugar and cannot get it on account of the famished conditions of existence in ration ruled countries makes its mother miserable at every meal time and the poor parent voices forth a prayer in distress begging for the dawn of better days. Can the merciful Almighty remain deaf to such appeals?

**THE HOUR HAS STRUCK**  
 Knock and it shall be opened unto you' said Jesus. That means that unless you knock the door will not open. Pearls will not be cast before swine. Food will not be served when your stomach is full. But the Lord's mercy is so great that the moment you knock, the door will be flung open. Arjuna was fifty years old when Sri Krishna (also fifty years old) his life long companion gave him the teaching of the Bhagavad Gita. Arjuna had to get rid of the feeling that he could solve every problem himself and had to beseech Krishna in all humility.

the virtuous This is no injustice Those nations that are destroyed take new birth in which they will not manifest evil propensities The Jivas would then have become purified They would already have gained the necessary experience for subordinating their Rajasic and Tamasic tendencies.

### LESSONS OF HISTORY

Let us now think of what happened in the past in Europe and America England had every good quality to make her rise up as an imperial power The broad-mindedness and sense of justice that were characteristic of her in the Victorian era deserve praise The prosperity she enjoyed was then merited by her But with the growth of power she became proud and when British pride became noticeable through the scorn she had for others, she began the ride for a fall There was an element of recklessness in her doings in the post Victorian period and the evil effects of her Rajasic temperament and deeds were responsible for the lesson God gave her in the end The Satvic force of Gendhur's spirituality in India triumphed over the Rajasic abilities of England The Mills of God grind slow but they grind sure

The rivalries and feuds between France and Germany, the injurious national outlook of Louis XIV and the insolent imperialism of Napoleon had their reaction in the vengefulness of Bismark These Christian nations were destined to evidence bitterness and hatred against each other, even as the petty Hindu kingdoms had to stew in their own juice in the Hindu period of Indian history The mad fury with which the late Kaiser attacked France as the preliminary to his attack on Britain had its own retribution when Germany got its knock out blow But the victors were not free from faults They revealed their vengeance when they drove away poor Wilson from their counsels and imposed upon the fallen foe impossible terms by way of penalties and indemnities France under

Clemenceau's lead was the real avenger and it was France that had to bear the brunt of sufferings when the second world war was launched by Adolf Hitler Europe has now learnt that evil cannot be conquered by evil and is now seeking for a way out of her state of perpetual fear

Russia and America face each other like the fearful gigantic foes that we hear of in legends Occidental and Oriental They have yet to experience the bitter consequences of their folly The achievement of happiness is not to be realised by the banishment of God or of virtue 'I'll fares the land, to hasten the ill a prey, where wealth accumulates and men decay' Statistics reveal too glaringly the depravity of sheer maturity in the people of America

In the West, the sensational novels that issue forth in hundreds every year reveal the unimaginably ignominious depths to which public taste has sunk The revolting brazenness with which, in the name of candour, sex-relations are blazoned to hooks is an unmistakable sign of the execrable erotic cancer that has fouled the inner nature of such writers and readers God seems to be intent upon revealing this moral degeneration in its lowest carnal form so that sane men may become horrified at the very sight of it Very rightly has President Eisenhower come forward with the declaration that he will not rest content till he has purged his country of this disgrace

### EVALUATION AND RENAISSANCE

Pursuing our argument let us infer that the Almighty has allowed these things to happen to the different parts of the world so that men may get disgusted with their condition and be in a mood to receive lessons from each other Unless there is an alliance of the East and the West—not in the political sense but in the spiritual sense—there will no be that transformation of human beings, which is indispensable for progress All of us have

now to be pulled up from the low levels in which we have sunk.

India has been for centuries grovelling in quagmires of superstition and parblind attachment to obsolete and antiquated shibboleths. The scientific spirit has not yet taken deep root even among the best of Indians. The most intelligent Indian still lives in theory, revels in dry, impractical metaphysical subtleties and displays an astonishing degree of penetrativeness in the enquiry into seemingly insubstantial categories and essences. Yet, he fights shy of putting his precepts into practice, of making experiments to verify his hypotheses and later on to demonstrate the validity of his arguments. This is due to constitutional indolence, and innate incapacity to exercise his will-power.

This defect of the Indians has to be removed and can be removed only if he becomes a scientist even in his daily life. But the scientist that he is to become is not the familiar figure who employs his time in making experiments in the laboratories of western countries. The Indian scientists, particularly those that are spiritually inclined, must perform their experiments in his own laboratory—the Mind. It is of no use merely to quote verbatim the Patanjali Sutras (dealing with Raja Yoga) and omitting classical commentaries written by sage who lived two thousand or three thousand years ago. Those scriptures state unambiguously how the spiritual aspirant who takes to practice of Raja Yoga can perform

wonders and attain Siddhis (supernatural powers). The present day intelligent and painstaking Indian monks must actually go through the process. That is the way in which they can get rid of the defect.

The Westerner on the other hand has to realise once for all the limitations of his physical science. He must recognise that there are fields of human aspiration, endeavour and success, unknown to physics and chemistry. He must tear off the veil that bides his vision, the veil of the ignorant assurance that everything ought to be demonstrated in his

laboratory. He must first recognise that the human mind is more powerful than the atom-smashing cyclotron and that ancient bards laid down in unmatchable language the mode of approach to such mysteries.

It is this enlargement of the vision of the westerner and the transformation of the theorist in India into a true scientist that is the purpose of all

powerful and all-merciful Providence, as I understand it.

Our Swamiji has come forward to take the necessary initial steps to bring about this alliance between the East and the West. The Parliament of Religions that met at Rishikesh in the first week of April, 1933, is the prelude. Almost every speaker emphasised the need to act in such a way as to bring about a unity between people belonging to different religions, instead of merely talking about the fundamental approaches and identical points of agreement between various religions.



Sri Swami Sadananda

Swamiji himself dilated upon the first and most important requisite, namely, a change of heart. The change of heart means merely the development of love and the abandonment of class, colour, race and ego consciousness. After the Parliament of Religions letters started pouring in from people in far off lands indicating great enthusiasm in favour of close and intimate contacts between India and foreign countries in

the spiritual plane of universal Love. That is proof positive that the original intentions of our Swamiji are being fulfilled. It is almost certain that the seeds laid by this Parliament have begun to germinate. Let us hope that they grow into full maturity and bring about the long longed for Parliament of Man and the Federation of the World.

## *Religious Parliaments in Retrospect*

SRI SWAMI SADANANDA

It was in September 1893 that the first Parliament of Religions was held. It was part of the World Fair organised at Chicago U.S.A., by Americans who were desirous of establishing valuable and enduring commercial relations with Europe. The later years of the 19th century witnessed an unprecedented expansion of the British Empire all over the world. The establishment of the Dominion of Canada in 1867, which once for all ended the long persisting animosity between the English Protestants of Upper Canada and the French Roman Catholics of Lower Canada, paved the way for the future enlargement of that British colony by the inclusion of fresh provinces and territories of British North America. Further off, Australia was emerging out of her tame bonoured obscurity and the names of Queen Victoria and her first Prime Minister, Melbourne, were being immortalised by the formation of separate colonies. Responsible government was given to Western Australia in 1890, by which year there were five great colonies in that region. More momentous than these were the great strides taken in the subjection of our own country. Lord Dalhousie, famous for his Doctrine of Lapse, Lord Lawrence, Lord Lytton and others carried out the imperialist designs of the famous Prime

Ministers of England like Disraeli and Salisbury and won, for the British, territorial wealth of no inconsiderable magnitude. The work of Cecil Rhodes in Cap Colony, whetted the British appetite still further.

Success leads to success, and the British did not miss chances to make themselves dominant in the Malaya Archipelago also. The purchase of the Suez canal shares by Disraeli in 1875 accelerated the pace of colonial expansion and commercial aggrandisement. All these happenings were being keenly watched by the newly arisen United States of America. Americans could never forget the determined stand they had taken in the seventies and eighties of the 18th century and the freedom that they had gained from the British who had been, for more than a century adopting a relentless policy of colonial exploitation. Even when George Canning, the British Foreign Secretary (who later on became the first Viceroy of India) proposed an Anglo American alliance against European intervention in America, the Americans were too suspicious of Great Britain to join the British. They preferred to remain aloof and peacefully develop and expand themselves in the South and the East.

Abraham Lincoln became the President in

November 1860 and had the misfortune of going through one of the bloodiest of civil wars—the American Civil War. But the four years of struggle (1861-5) did not go in vain. The Americans learnt from it the unforgettable lesson of the value of union. When the civil war was being carried on, the British had unnecessarily incurred American displeasure by favouring the Southern American States as against the Northern. This incident—known as the Alabama incident—served to make the Americans very wary in their future dealings with the British. The incident was closed only in 1872 after very lengthy negotiations. The relations between the U.S.A., and Britain continued to be, if not actually hostile, at least anything but cordial. In 1890 Lord Salisbury, the British Foreign Secretary, refused to accept the good offices of the President of the United States who wanted to mediate between Great Britain and the President of the Venezuela Republic on a boundary question.

#### CHICAGO RELIGIOUS PARLIAMENT

That was the political atmosphere when the Americans organised the Chicago World Fair. The motives of the Americans can now be properly appreciated. They were afraid of British competition. With the unlimited resources at their disposal, the British could kill the international trade of the U.S.A., which was in the stage of infancy. Unless something was done to show the European nations that there were great possibilities in America, they would be under the hypnotising influence of the British commercial magnates and they could not be induced to exchange their goods for American ones. Nothing would be more beneficial to American international trade, under such circumstances, than an exhibition—the Americans called it an Exposition—and so they organised the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago.

The Exposition (otherwise called the World Fair) was a great success, but we are more

concerned with the Parliament of Religions which was pinned on to it. The significance of this Parliament can be appreciated only if we enter into the real motives with which it was organised by its promoters. I have already said that the persons who wanted such a Parliament were the leading lights of Roman Catholicism. With the support of the Pope, the Parliament began its sessions at 10 a.m., on Sunday, the 11th September, 1893. The opening address was delivered by Dr. Barrows, at the Art Institute, Chicago. If we visualise the delegates as they were seated in the Parliament, we can form some idea of the effect that the gathering was intended to produce upon the thousands of spectators. In the centre sat Cardinal Gibbons, the highest Prelate of the Roman Catholic Church in Western Europe. He was grandly dressed in scarlet robes, and seated upon a chair of state. Other delegates coming from the Orient, were seated to the right and left of him. The idea was that the grandest of all religions was Christianity in its early form of Roman Catholicism and that other religions were to present their cases in their own humble way and get permission to exist in the world obviously for the reason that 'heathens' had not yet reached the stage when they could appreciate or assimilate the sublime and lofty truths of Christianity.

The solemnity of the proceedings was expressed through the gorgeousness of the apparel of all the delegates, Oriental and Occidental. Swami Vivekananda, whose very admission into the Parliament was a proof of divine grace, (as all who have studied his life know) was conspicuous among the delegates. He was clothed in dazzling red apparel and he wore a large yellow turban. The red and yellow are significantly Indian colours being the Kumkuma and the turmeric of our Devis, the embodiments of Para Sakti. By the side of Swami Vivekananda were Nagarkar, the

Brahmo Samaj delegate Dharmapala Ceylon's Buddhist representative Mazoomdar the leader of the Theists in India Gandhi (not the Mahatma) representing the Jains and Cackravarti; and Anna Bhastuti representing Theosophy. The delegates had to address the visitors seated in the pit in front of them.

#### VIVEKANANDA MAKES AN IMPRESSION

It is unnecessary to give an account of the lectures or of the different items in the programme. Suffice it to say that Swami Vivekananda spoke for the first time on the 11th September. It was a short speech and as far as Swami Vivekananda was concerned a maiden speech delivered only after charging himself with the spirit of the Lord for otherwise he would not have had the nerve to address such a large audience and in the immediate presence of such grand personages as Cardinal Gibbons and the rest of his fraternity. But the speech electrified the audience. The West had never before listened to a speech which came straight from the heart overflowing with love for all God's creation. It was not an intellect effecting a contact with other intellects but it was an all embracing heart enveloping all the little hearts outside itself even as a mother hugs all her children at once. The spirit of eclecticism the sense of universality the fundamental earnestness and univalled broad mindedness that revealed themselves through every syllable uttered by Swami Vivekananda had the effect of once for all conquering the hearts of the western people who heard themselves for the first time addressed as Brothers and Sisters of America.

But—and it is an important but—were all equally pleased? No. The organisers were the Roman Catholics of Europe. They could not help seeing that something had happened which they had not bargained for. It was not for the propagation of Hinduism or Vedantism that they had organised the Parliament. They

had chosen America for a special reason—which we shall presently examine—so that their religion might thrive. They could not feel happy that the audience were carried off their legs by the speech of a heathen—a black Indian who had intruded into the Parliament owing to the soft heartedness of one of his American friends. This feeling of disappointment even chagrin was responsible for Swami Vivekananda not being given another chance till the 19th of September. Even that became possible only because the President of the Science section, Merwin Marie Snell developed a special attachment for the Swami; and he came through him so ardent devotee of Hinduism.

But who can hide the sun under a bushel? When the Swami got the chance he spoke not words of controversial polemics or empty clap trap but words that sank deep in the listener's heart and transformed him into a new personality purging him of his pride or prejudices and purifying him to the extent of making him the friend of humanity as a whole and not of one section of it in particular.



An Illustrous Representative Of India

The value of Swami Vivekananda's work can be fully appreciated only if we examine the condition of Roman Catholicism in Europe at that time. The Parliament of Religions was held in 1893, twenty three years after some very great historical events had happened in Europe. No student of European history can afford to forget the year 1870, the year of the Franco Prussian war. It was in 1815 that the last nail was driven into the coffin of the old Holy Roman Empire and the new German Confederation of 39 sovereign States was established. But discontented Prussia succeeded little by little in freeing herself from her allegiance to Austria, and in 1858 William brother of the insane Frederic William IV, became regent and after creating a most powerful Prussian army, became King in 1862. With the help of Bismarck, he adopted a policy of blood and iron and in the battle of Sadowa in 1866 inflicted a decisive defeat upon the Austrians. The next achievement of Bismarck was the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 in which Napoleon III of France surrendered to the Prussian army at Sedan. That was the occasion when France lost Alsace and Lorraine to Prussia. Now William I called himself the German Emperor.

#### EUROPEAN POLITICS AND THE CHURCH

These purely political events had a direct effect upon the Pope and Roman Catholicism. The newly arisen Empire of William I had two enemies—the Socialists and the Catholics. William I and his minister Bismarck were bent on crushing the Catholics and make them accept the Emperor instead of the Pope as their head. The Pope at that time was the powerful Pius IX. He had strongly opposed the Italian attempts to establish a united Italy. He had even gone out of Rome and appealed to the Catholic powers of Europe to help him against Mazzini and Garibaldi who were attempting to unite Italy into a single State. This Pope had set his face against all modern ideas and denounced the theory that the Holy See was subject

to civil authority. Bismarck would not tolerate such an attitude on the part of the Pope. In fact, this was a sort of renewal of the mediaeval rivalry between the Empire and the Papacy. But Bismarck was master of the situation in his own country. He expelled the Jesuits from the German Empire in 1872 and also passed what were known as the 'May Laws' in 1873, compelling all Catholic priests in Prussia to have a government certificate of training before they could officiate. This did not bow down the Roman Catholics. In fact, the resistance stiffened, the Pope took advantage of the socialist opposition to the Empire and sided them. The result was that even Bismarck had to submit to the new Pope Leo XIII in 1878.

Thus from 1878, it appeared that the Roman Catholics were having the upper hand in the German Empire. But their period of satisfaction or triumph was short lived. Emperor William I died in 1888, and was succeeded by Frederic III. He died in three months. The next Emperor, William II, was the great Kaiser who was responsible for the first world war. He dismissed Bismarck in 1890. But he was stronger than Bismarck to his ideas of a national Church. He would not brook any opposition from the Catholics or the Pope. Thus as long as the new Emperor was on the throne of Imperial Germany, there was no chance of Roman Catholicism regaining old position of respectability in Europe.

If we now turn to France and Italy, we shall see that there, too, Roman Catholicism had lost favour. In France, King Napoleon III had been thoroughly defeated in the Franco-Prussian war. The dynasty itself was overthrown and in 1870 a Republic was proclaimed with Gambetta as Minister of the Interior. The Empress and her son had to escape for safety to England. The new Republic of France had to face the opposition of the Royalists and also of the Catholics. In the end, the Republic triumphed, so far as the Royalist

were concerned. But the Church would not accept the new Constitution. Fighting went on till 1892 when Pope Leo XIII advised the French (Catholic) Bishops to accept the Republic. That was because the Republic had passed several laws taking away the privileges which were being enjoyed by the Church. For example in 1881 had been passed an Education Act depriving the Church of its monopoly over education. An act had also been passed banishing the Jesuits. These show how Roman Catholicism and the Papacy could not find favour in France.

#### AMBITIONS OF THE POPE

The same happened in Italy also. We have seen that Pope Pius IX had resisted the attempts of Mezzini and Garibaldi to establish an independent Italy. But Garibaldi succeeded in entering the Papal States in November 1867. Now Napoleon was the King of France. He was a friend of the Pope. He sent a French force which routed Garibaldi at Mentana. It appeared, therefore, that Pius IX would have the upper hand. But as fate would have it, the French were attacked by the Prussians in 1870 and all the French forces were withdrawn from Italy in August 1870 for service against Prussia. That gave the chance for Garibaldi's forces to re-enter the Papal dominions in September, 1870. Then a plebiscite was held to find out the opinion of the people of Rome as to whether Rome should belong to the Government of Italy or to the Pope. The answer from the people through the plebiscite was that Rome should be ruled by Italy and not by the Pope. That revealed what opinion the people had about the Pope and his Government. Still Pius IX remained obstinate. He retired within the Vatican palace (his official residence) and refused to recognise the Italian Kingdom. Thus it was that the Pope had to remain a prisoner in his own palace. The Italian Government then came to a compromise. It recognised the sovereignty of the Pope within his palace, tho-

Vatican. The Pope also then recognised the Italian Kingdom.

Thus we see that ever since 1870, the Popes were anxious somehow or other to regain the position of respectability that they had lost. Europe did not give them any scope. The Kaiser, the Italian Kingdom and the French Republic were the chief powers in Europe and none had any liking for the papacy. So when the Americans organised the Chicago fair, the R C Christians of Europe thought that a great opportunity was presenting itself to them which should not be missed. America was a new land—a rapidly growing continent. The people were, it was believed, religious-minded, because migrations to America in the seventeenth century had been for religious causes. Even supposing the older colonies were not very warm in welcoming Roman Catholicism, there had come into existence a number of new States in the south and the west of the U.S.A. which contained many new settlers. Further the prejudice against Red Indians was gone. They could all be converted to Roman Catholicism. All that was needed was an imposing display of the greatness of Roman Catholicism. If the New World was brought under the influence of Roman Catholicism, it would be the first step to the restoration of the lost ecclesiastical sway over temporal monarchs.

It was with such high hope that the Roman Catholics started this endeavour. If their motives had been purely humanitarian if they had desired merely to examine impartially the truths embedded in all the religions no better place could be thought of than England. But no! the Roman Catholics could not—in these days—have any love for Protestant England. There was a danger of the local influence of Protestantism—of Wesleyan Methodism—overpowering Catholicism. So, America was certainly better for their purpose.

But mysterious are the ways of the Lord. It was the empty pocketed and ill equipped Indian monk that captured the hearts of the

andience and not the men of pomp and power. Dr Barrows and Cardinal Gibbons have been forgotten but Ramakrishna Paramahansa, who had been unknown in foreign lands, became a symbol of the Indian spiritual renaissance, presented to the western world by the eastern luminary, Swami Vivekananda.

Such was the history of the first Parliament of Religions. The second was held in Bombay on May, 1936, as part of the Ramakrishna Centenary celebration. Even before that, there was an International Congress of Religious Liberals at Boston in 1920. It was attended by Swami Yogananda the Founder of the Self Realization Fellowship. The organisers were Christians Rev Clay Macaulay, Rev T R Williams, Rev J T Sunderland, Rev Charles Wood, Rev Samuel Eliot Rev Basil Marten, Rev Christopher J Street and Rev Samuel U Crowther. All of them were eminent people. Paramahansa Yogananda was then a young man of extraordinary spiritual power. He was a disciple of Sri Yukteswar of Serampore, Bengal, who himself had learnt at the feet of the great Master Lahiri Mahasaya of Banaras.

The international Congress was as much proof of the tremendous hold that Hinduism, after Vivekananda, had upon western thought as of Paramahansa Yogananda's abilities. This Swami was able to establish his great Self Realization Fellowship centre at Los Angeles, California, and gain thousands of the temporally-minded westerners as his spiritual disciples. It became clear that the seeds laid by the great Vivekananda were sprouting forth into robust plants.

#### RELIGIOUS PARLIAMENT IN BOMBAY

The Bombay Parliament of Religions was held on the 7th, 8th and 9th of May, 1936 in Cowasji Jehangir Hall and presided by Sir S Radhakrishnan. It is interesting to note that on the dais there were the oil paintings not only of Zoroaster, Lord Krishna, Jesus Christ, Lord Buddha, but also of Sri Ramakrishna.

There was also the star and crescent symbol of Islam. Unlike its famous predecessor, it did not have unnecessary display but it did some good work in a very unostentatious fashion. Many of the local celebrities of Bombay were present. Among those who attended were the Thinkore Sheb of Lumbdi, Sri Lalubhai Samaldas, Sri Chunilal Mehta, Sri Hormosji Adenwala, Sri Nanubhai Mehta, Sri Hormuzdiar Dastor, Sri K Natarajan, Swami Viswananda and Madam Sophia Wadia. Messages were received from Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore. M R Jayakar was the chairman of the Reception Committee. There were many good speeches on the different religions. The key note in all the speeches was that there should be unity between the different religions. Prof N G Damla who expounded the teachings of Hinduism said 'Today we have enough religion to hate each other but not to love one another. Matter is controlled by the mind, but the mind remains to a great extent uncontrolled.'

It must be remembered that when this Parliament was held the world was in a fear of new war. There was developing all over Europe a war mentality and naturally the religious minded would have been feeling almost helpless because the world was not in a mood to listen to any good counsel. There was the pernicious hypnotism of Hitler whose rise to power induced many people into the belief that pacifism was harmful and no country deserved to survive if it could not fight for its rights. So, the Parliament of Religions held in Bombay in 1936 could not be said to have done anything valuable for the promotion of peace. The President, Sir S Radhakrishnan, was perhaps feeling that the whole thing was infructuous, for we notice that only ten minutes were allotted to each of the speakers.

#### ANOTHER PARLIAMENT IN CALCUTTA

The next Parliament of Religions was held at Calcutta in 1937 for eight days from the 1st

March, under the auspices of the RamaKrishna Ceotuary Committee. This Parliament had fifteen sessions in all and the organisers believed that it created a keen interest among the people not only of India and other parts of Asia, but also of Europe America and Africa. Surely there were representatives from England, France, Switzerland Holland Czechoslovakia, Poland, America, Mauritius, Iran, Iraq, China and Tibet.

Scholars, heads of religious organisations and even social workers took part in the proceedings. They numbered more than two hundred. For each session there was a separate President. The entire proceedings of the Parliament of Religions have been published as the *Religions of the World* in two bulky volumes, and the articles contained in them are very scholarly, being written by great masters, each proficient in his particular branch of study.

Sixteen years have now passed since that Parliament was held. That was only a meeting of the learned people of the East and the West. They exchanged their thoughts and have also given us the benefit of their studies. They have made use of the intellect aspect of their minds for communicating some ideas in the intellect aspect of our minds. But what effect can such intellectual contacts of minds have upon us? Can we develop a feeling of brotherhood by merely talking about it?

The times now are far different from the times that we went through in 1937. The second world war has given us lessons which we can never forget. The meteoric rise and fall of dictators, Hitler, Mussolini and the rest, the use of the atom bomb for putting an end—at least for the time being—to what appeared to be a never ending war are events which have sunk deep into us. The total destruction of self respect in the European countries which had been subject to Hitler, the excesses of brutality that were perpetrated during the

course of the war, the complete unsettlement of economic security, and, last but not the least the creation of the irremovable fear complex in the mentality of the little powers of modern Europe, are all lessons which will remain with us for ever.

It is now that some people in the West are looking towards India eagerly and are cherishing the hope that the Peace which the West has lost can be given to it by us because it knows, not quite correctly, that India is the land of Shanti. It is the grieved heart, the heart that is full of affliction, that is the fittest to receive the highest spiritual teaching. It was Arjuna's despondency (*Vishada*) that made him fit to become the disciple of Sri Krishna. This is but appropriate that our message of Peace should be delivered in these uncertain times when the two rival power blocks have forced humanity into the pandemonium of despair and hope.

#### POSITIVE MUST TRIUMPH OVER NEGATIVE

Indeed it is possible for each one of us, even the humblest of the humble, to contribute our mite towards the establishment of peace and tranquillity in the world. It is not necessary, in these days of scientific progress to emphasise the truth that every thought is but an electrical charge moving continuously throughout the world, even as wireless waves which go up to the ionosphere get reflected back to the surface of the earth. Whenever we send out a thought, good, bad or indifferent, we are actually sending a wave which is caught (unconsciously) by everyone whose mind is in touch with that of the sender of the thought. Such sympathetic minds are innumerable. So, if each one of us will take the trouble of setting apart some minutes everyday for the generation of Tranquillity-thoughts they will be received by some people all over the world. That means that their agitating minds will become less agitated.

The larger the number of such thought currents that are sent out, the greater will be the degree of peace attained in the world, and, because Right has to conquer the Wrong, the good or Satvic forces will triumph over the Rajasic and the Tamasic forces sooner or later. That is service which each one of us can do in

his or her own humble way. It was this secret that was known to our ancients who everyday recited the Sloks beginning with *Svasti Prayabhya Paripalayontam*. That was also the reason why on every important occasion we repeat the words *Om Shanti* !

## *The World Parliament of Religions Inaugurated*

REPORT OF THE PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

RISHIKESH, April 3, 1953.—The three day Parliament of Religions attended by over 200 delegates representing all important religions was inaugurated here today by Sir C P Ramaswamy Aiyar at the Sivananda Ashram on the banks of the Ganges.

Sixty seven year old Swami Sivananda who has organized the conference, and Sir Ramaswamy Aiyar stressed the unity of all religions underlying differences in "non-essential" and ritualistic aspects.

Sir Ramaswamy Aiyar said "It is our function to emphasize unity in variety. The world is not made to a single pattern and variety is as important as unity. Those who would like to have dull uniformity are doing as great a disservice to religions as those who emphasize meaningless differences."

The spirit that had animated the Indian races through centuries, Sir Ramaswamy Aiyar said, had been a common quest for the Ultimate. "Our roads may diverge but our goal is the same."

"Today when the world is gripped by fear," he added "if India stands for anything, she stands for liberation from fear. That is the contribution which India can make to world peace."

Messages wishing the conference success were received from the Vice President Dr S Radhakrishnan, Union Ministers, Governors,

Raj Pramukhs, Mr B G Kher Indian High Commissioner in London, Mr Chester Bowles, General Carrappa and several overseas organizations.

### PARTICIPANTS

The Ashram where the conference is being held is built on a hill side overlooking a ravine through which the Ganges streams down into the plains.

Those participating in the conference included Major General Yudhanath Singh who played a leading part in the Indian Army's operations in Kashmir and is now Chief of the Military Mission in Nepal, Major General A N Sharma, the former head of the Army's Medical Services, Sanyasis and many others. Before the conference began, the Guru Granth Sahib was taken out in a procession headed by an elephant and accompanied by brass band.

At the conference Swami Sivananda recited verses from the Upanishads and sang a chant in English honouring prophets and seers of all religions including Jesus Christ, Mohammed, Buddha, Confucius and Krishna.

Swami Sivananda denied that religion was opium of the masses, and said "It is not a disease born of fear, but it is our very breath. It shows the way to peace, brotherhood and Self realization."

The afternoon session was held under the chairmanship of the Rev E St John

Catchpool of the Society of Friends. The main theme of the speakers was "The Danger to Religion."

Dr. Mohammad Hafiz Syed, retired professor of Philosophy, Allahabad University, said "because of our indifference to and ignorance of our own faith, a wave of Communism, Communism and Fascism is sweeping this world and more especially our unfortunate country."

Dr B L Atreya, head of the Department of Philosophy, Banaras Hindu University, said that if religion was to survive, "it must adopt scientific methods to test its dogmas and beliefs." "Leaving aside the spiritual value of Ganges water," he said, "if we say that

Ganges water cures diseases or kills germs, we will have to test it in the laboratories. You cannot escape from science."

He held, however, that there were many questions to which religion alone could give answer and not science.

Swami Sivananda, organizer of the conference, improvised verses, exhorting the audience to be good, to give up smoking, to raise their voice against social evils and to work hard in the service of their nations.

At dusk, as light mist enveloped the hills, the large crowd assembled joined in the worship of "Ganga Mata."

## Welcome Address to the Delegates

SRI N. C. GHOSH, M.A.

[Chairman, Reception Committee, World Parliament of Religions]



It is my joy and privilege to welcome you all to this holy place on this occasion of unparalleled importance.

I know that the thought uppermost in the mind of each one of you assembled here today to take part in this historic event, is the problem of peace. It is indeed an irony that in this twentieth century peace has become a problem!

You have assembled here as pioneers in this new approach to peace. Conferences of various sorts have been held all over the world during the past decades: and you know the result! Peace conferences have almost invariably led to the declaration of war.

You, who have realised that religion is the talisman that could banish disharmony which is the root-cause of all wars, have assembled here in order to devise ways and means of ensuring peace that every man and woman in this world today ardently hopes would come to stay. Rarely before had there been such a Parliament on the soil of India; and I venture to say that a Parliament of Religions could grow and yield the fruits of peace and

harmony only if it is planted on the soil of India which is rich in the life giving elements of real religion. It is said that King Asoka and Akbar had also convened such a Parliament centuries ago.

To the saintly convenors of the present Parliament, humanity owes a deep debt of gratitude, for giving the right lead to mankind at the right time from the right quarters. The convenors and the principal delegates to the Parliament are, as you know, men who are revered all over the world; their word would be listened to, for people have realised that in their heart dwells a selfless love for the entire humanity. You are familiar with the life and mission of Yogi Suddhananda Bharati who is a mass of radiant spiritual light and energy. During his recent tour of South East Asia he had broadcast the message of Yoga to the peoples of Melaya, Burma and Japan. Every Indian knows Sir C P., the political genius and able administrator, who quite recently toured America delivering lectures on Indian Philosophy, and thus won the hearts' admiration and adoration of thousands of Westerners. Major General A N. Sherma was called a Mahatma in the Indian Army, and while he was in the Army he has travelled widely, silently radiating the powerful currents of love and unity. I need hardly introduce Sri Swami Sivaoadaji to you all.

Swami Sivananda is the prophet of freedom from conventionalism, harmony of faiths, religious toleration and inter racial amity. He is one of the foremost spiritual seers of the world who, standing on the hedgehog of his own realisation, has declared emphatically and unequivocally, the truth that the different religions are like so many paths leading to the same goal of God realisation. The whole world had heard in 1950 during his epoch making All India Tour his inspiring message of peace and goodwill that was broadcast through the radio to the farthest corner of the globe.

Swamiji a heart is truly a Parliament of Religions.

It is, therefore, but meet that, with the blessings of all and under the personal guidance of this glorious apostle of 'Harmony of Religions' worthy representatives of various religions should have assembled here with the noble object of establishing a closer relationship of amity and goodwill among the different faiths and churches of the world. It augurs well for the Parliament that its convenors are men of world renown and could therefore speak for the entire humanity. We have their rich blessings in our holy endeavour.

Leaders of thought from all parts of the world have sent us greetings and messages of their good wishes. Eminent Indians have heartily blessed this historic event. It is, therefore, my great joy to welcome you to this Abode of Bliss on the banks of the holy Ganga at the foot of the Himalayas. These have from time immemorial been regarded as the Home of Peace. I need hardly remind you who are all well versed in the philosophies of the world that the very air we breathe in today is saturated with the fragrance of peace—a mysterious fragrance which has continually emanated from the God men who have always flourished in the Himalayas. It is our rare privilege that we should even at this very moment have in our midst illustrious representatives of this galaxy of God men.

In our deliberations we shall be guided by their Eternal Thought Force. It is now up to you all venerable exponents of Philosophy, to set about the sacred tasks in a spirit of good will and cordiality, love and admiration and to evolve a wise outlook upon life that would lead to union of hearts among the peoples of the world. For such is the sacred duty you have imposed upon yourselves—the duty of giving a new lead to mankind.

You have assembled here at a crucial moment in the history of the world when the

people everywhere are awake to the fact that materialistic misleaders are a menace to follow. Now is the time for you to come forward and in all humility place before humanity the shining truth that religion holds the key to the realm of unity and the kingdom of peace and bliss. Let us then explore the best methods of awaking the religious sense in the heart of man. We should remove from the mind of man the current misconception that religion leads to controversy. Let us assure the followers of all the religions of the world that each religion is fundamentally the same as any other, and that every religion can lead man to the same goal, bestow on him the same fruits of peace and happiness, if practised es siduously.

I pray to you that you might—each one of you—place before the Parliament, the practical tenets of the religion you represent. For, it is the mere intellect that divides. The anxious gaze of the entire mankind is today riveted upon you, assembled here. It is up to you to reveal how practising the essential principles of the religion to which one belongs, either by birth or by conviction, one can achieve the same goal. If the need is felt to compare your religion with that of others let it be only to show how all religions are very much alike at the core. Having assembled here in the presence of the mighty spiritual personality of today, Sri Swami Sivananda who has time and again proclaimed that the Path to God lies through unity and love—let us eschew controversies and unwholesome criticism. The destiny of mankind is today in your hands to mould it as you will.

I extend a hearty welcome to the numerous seekers and aspirants who have assembled here.

You have done well to come and to be witness to this epoch making event that would go down in our religious history as a memorable point in the destiny of mankind. You have already realised that here is a rare opportunity of achieving two great objects at the same time. You can hear directly from the lips of the foremost authorities of the various religions, the fundamentals of the religions they represent and you can at the same time enjoy the Satanga of sages and saints of the East and the West who have graced this function with their august presence. During these three days you will be greatly enriched in spirit and I do hope that, with the grace and blessings of the Mahatmas assembled here, all of you will find spiritual light here and now—the light that will enable you to walk the path of righteousness to the shade of peace and bliss.

We quite realise that, being so far off place, we have not been able to secure the comforts and conveniences with which we would very much have liked to provide you, please bear with us. And I know that, having regard to the stupendous mission we are determined to fulfil, you will overlook the deficiencies.

Once again I welcome you all. We are grateful to you for so readily responding to our invitation. You have made immense personal sacrifice to come over here and give us the benefit of your wisdom. The very presence of the august personages present here today makes me feel that the Parliament is already a success! May we by the grace of the Almighty, achieve the great goal we have set before ourselves! May the Light of Truth and Love guide our deliberations.

'Desire for mundane objects is the most dangerous enemy of the individual's peace. It harrows one like a vicious obsession. It cuts at the root of wisdom and knows no satiation. Therefore, cultivate dispassion, discriminate, meditate and enjoy everlasting happiness.'

—Sivananda

Inaugural Address

# *Deliver the Message of True Wisdom and Lasting Peace*

DR SIR C.P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR  
(Vice Chancellor, Annamalai University, Madras)

Swami Sivananda Saraswati, revered friends  
sisters and brothers!

To me has been given the inestimable honour of inaugurating this great assembly which has been termed the Parliament of Religions. The notice summoning this meeting proceeds to describe itself as designed to effect mass spiritual awakening and world peace. Great ideas, greatly adumbrated!

It is in the fitness of things that this part where the holy Ganga emerges from the heights to dispense her blessings and her fructifying gifts upon a thirsting land, that this part should have been chosen for this function. It is equally in the fitness of things that the initiator of this movement, the one to whom this meeting owes its origin, should be Sri Swami Sivananda, one who has astonished the world by the versatility of his genius by the manysidedness of his faculties and by the contributions unnumberable and diverse in character, which he has given to the world. It was only this morning that according to his usual kindness he sent me a large packet of books which ranged in their contents from the commentary on the Brahma Sutras and on the Upanishads to the way of making a success of life, and also contained a selection of Radio Talks by the Swamiji in his recent epoch making tour throughout the country.

I am mentioning these aspects and facts for the purpose of illustrating and amplifying how many sided are his contributions and his gifts to us and how grateful we should be for this supreme gift, viz., summoning us all together for this great purpose, the purpose of mass spiritual awakening and of world peace.

On welcoming me to the Presidentship of this gathering, reference has been made to Sri Appayya Dikshita. In order to illustrate the genius and the moral and the spiritual equipment of Appayya Dikshita, may I be permitted to quote a verse from his multiform writings?

स्वे रूपादित्यं भगवो प्याजेन वक्तव्यतम्  
सुल्या निर्वचनीयतादिनगुरु दूर्योदाता प्रभास्या  
व्यापितं च निराहृत भगवतो वस्तार्थ्यानादिना  
क्षमतये ब्रह्मदीया तद्विलक्षा दोषवर्य मरहृतम्॥

"May the Lord forgive me for three sins which I daily and continuously commit. Firstly, the sin of giving and endowing a particular form to the Formless; secondly, praising by prayer and exaltation, one who is indecribable and beyond all prayer and speech, thirdly, by localising one who is present throughout the universe, by worshipping Him at a particular Tirtha or a shrine. These are the great sins that I commit daily and hourly and may I be forgiven."

I deem it one of the inestimable privileges of my existence that it has been possible for me, unworthy as I am, to be referred to as a descendant of such a sage but a worthy descendant of Sri Appayya Dikshita is by my right and he deserves that appellation.

My good friends, I do not propose today merely to treat you to a general discourse upon Hinduism or upon any religion. We have met in what is called a Parliament of Religions. This idea of a Parliament is not unknown to us. It is part of our tradition says the Rig Veda

संयज्ञ्य संयज्ञ्य से ये मनाति जानताम्

"Let us come together. Let us speak or discuss with each other. Let our minds

remain in union with each other' This is the object, this is the idea underlying this Parliament of Religions.

And in this Parliament of Religions, it must be our duty as it is our function to emphasise that unity in variety is the hall mark of all true religious quest. Yes, unity that must be emphasised. But equally variety must not be forgotten. The world is not to be made a single pattern. Everyone is not cut in the same image. Mental, physical, psychological, moral attributes and equipments are different from individual to individual. Religious revelation, religious realisation must therefore, differ according to the attributes, the background, and the tradition of each individual, and, therefore, it is that variety is as important as unity, and those who would like to have a dull uniformity and unity are doing as great a disservice to religion as those who emphasise meaningless differences.

Even here, I make bold to say that the Indian faith, the Indian creed, is itself a Parliament of Religions.

ये शीरा समुपासते शिव इति ब्रह्मेति वेदात्तिनो  
वैद्यु चुद इति प्रमाणपट्ट वर्तेति नैषामिका ।  
श्रद्धनिष्ठ्य जैनशासनरत्न कमोति मीमांसा  
चोऽयं वा विद्धातु घाणितपल्ल नैतोऽस्यायो हरि ॥

'He whom the Saivites worship as Siva, He whom the Vedantists style as Brahman, He whom the Buddhists adore as the Lord Buddha. He whom the Jains call the Arhat. He whom the Naishayikas call the First Cause, He whom the Mimameekshas adore as Karma, He who is the source of all glory and bliss, we do adore. That is the essence of the Parliament of Religions. That is the fundamental Message of the Indian tradition and the Indian spirit. That is from the outer point.

यस्माज्ञात ऋषिर्वेद यस्तद्भवत्य द्रव्येति ।  
देवेति धार्यते चैव तस्मै शानामनेन नम ।

'He who is everywhere, He who is immanent, He who is outside and inside, Him shall we

adore.' This is the idea of the Parliament, in relation to one's own life. Again,

ग्राम्या त्वं गिरिग्रामति सहचरा प्राणा शरीर एवम्  
पूजा ते विषेषभोगरचना निद्रासमाधिस्थिति ।  
सचाः पदश्च प्रदक्षिणविधि स्तोत्राणां सर्वे भित्रे  
यथ कर्म कर्यम तत्तदस्तिल शाम्भो तवारथनम् ॥

"O Lord! Let everything that I do in daily life be an act of dedication and of worship. Let me consider myself, my own Atman, as Thyself manifest, the great Parvati is my Buddhi, my intellect and my spirit and all the acts of daily life are acts of adoration and worship." So that is for your inner life, for your daily conduct, for the outlook upon the universe, for your aspiration. That is the Parliament of Religions outlined for us by the words of our sage. And, indeed it may be said that the life of the Indian nation, the spirit that has animated the Indian races, has been not a particular dogma or a doctrine, not a specific creed nor article of faith, but indeed a common quest. We are different in a hundred respects but we agree on one thing that our search is for the Ultimate. Our aspirations may diverge but our goal is the same.

Let me on this occasion point out how that goal had been indicated and envisaged. That goal is not to be regarded as a private divine event. It is to be regarded as something which actualises itself in a realisation. And, that is why our great Shastras or great scriptures are called Darshans—that which is seen is a Darshan. Our religion, our cultural and spiritual background, is not a thing for vague dreaming, but for realisation. What is seen, what is experienced, what is realised is what is called real for us. And, that is the net result of a great deal of thought and aspiration bestowed on this matter.

The great Sankara said, 'If you want wisdom, do not go here and there. It is through ratiocination, it is through argument, research, disputation, reasoning, that you arrive at

century followed, and it was an age when reason, so-called reason, was enthroned as against the claims of religion, the Goddess of Reason was enthroned in Paris, putting aside all the images in the various churches. And that had a very short reign, the goddess did not live very long. The 19th century dethroned reason for economic progress, industrial development. Economic progress was enthroned in the 19th century. In the 20th century today we are on a quest for security.

Security from what, of what? Of mankind, from fear—fear against war, against economic enslavement against creedal and ideological differences. It is thus that we have come round to a full circle from fear to fear. Therefore, in this stage, when the whole world is gripped by the domination of this fear, our Parliament of Religions, and especially the contribution of India to that Parliament of Religions, is and can be noteworthy, because if India stands for anything, it stands for freedom, liberation from fear, the realisation of the supremacy of the Self and the oneness of the Self with all other selves—that is the contribution which India can make to world peace.

In this juncture, it may not be out of place to remember that those philosophies, that those ideas which gained sway and held the mind of man for many decades, the philosophy of mechanistic, deterministic conception of the universe has disappeared. About 50 or 100 years ago they used to say that the doctrine of Maya was a dreamer's idea and that the Hindu genius was nullifying itself by developing such a very unsatisfying doctrine. It is worthy of note that the teachings of the most modern scientists of today have come back to the doctrine of Maya. They have put aside the mechanistic theory of the universe. We have been told by mathematicians and physicists, not by theologians, Sadhus and Swamis, but by men like Sir James Jeans,

Eddington, Einstein, that what we call a chair is not a chair and that this loudspeaker does not exist! It is only a series of electrons which take that form because of certain environmental attributes of the mind. So that the world is a play of the mind. That is Maya. Whether all these things can be proved by testimony or not is a different matter. The old theories of mechanistic conception are disappearing.

But many people say What right has India to preach to the world, either in a Parliament of Religions or elsewhere upon these great doctrines, when as a matter of fact, these doctrines have very little value or importance? They ask What about your caste system, about your idolatry. I wish just for a couple of minutes to devote myself to these two problems.

**Idolatry** We are idolators. My answer end my question is Who is not! Many, many years ago, there was a great English philosopher called Francis Bacon who wrote a book called *Nova Organum*. There he analyses the world as consisting of idolators. What are his idols? The idols described by Lord Bacon are the following—Idols of the tribe. Those thoughts, those preconceived opinions which make for lack of independence and detachment—all against each—and the individual erects an idolatry of his own, and makes it impossible for him to think rightly, to think logically, continuously, correctly, to a logical conclusion. These are the idols of the tribe.

Then there are idols of the cave. Idols produced to the mind by the construction and circumstances of the individual—a man's society, a man's environments, the place of his birth, the origin of his birth, his mental or his financial circumstances. They are idols which unconsciously but nevertheless vitally animate him and determine his conduct. Thirdly, there are the idols of the market place. A man thinks he is thinking for himself no, he is not. The society around him, the next door neighbour—the man who meets him

in his club, in his professional association—these exercise a great, a profound, a malign influence upon him, and he is subject to what Bacon calls the idols of the market place. And, ultimately, there are the idols of the theatre. The philosophies which a man learns, the books that a man studies, the observations which a man makes, will unconsciously colour the man so that he is unable to be impartial. There are very few men who do not subscribe to or worship idols of the tribe, idols of the cave, idols of the market place and idols of the theatre. Are not eloquent idols? Are not temporarily exalted political or social leaders' idols? Images were created and have been brought into being and temples have been built for the purpose of clarifying the conception of those to whom those things are needed. These idols—whether they are national idols or psychological idols or moral idols or idols in the form of great knowledge or of men (political and social leaders) enthroned for the time being and dethroned sometime later—these idols are unexpungable, inescapable facts of human consciousness. If what we have tried to do is to give it a real shape and form, to enable people to try the idol and to get rid of the idol that is the whole idea of idolatry that people refer to.

Theo they come to our caste system. We are aware of the ramifications, the divisions and sub-divisions and infinite multiplication of that system. Let us remember

चातुर्वर्ये मया सूर् गुणस्मितिःगम्य

'Castes were brought into being by me, according to disposition and according to Karma.' In a great passage in the Uddhava Gita it is said that originally there was only one caste amongst all men that caste was called the Hamsa. 'Thereupon by Guna and Karma these differentiations took place.' Hinduism has been adaptive, assimilative and absorbent, and I have no doubt that if great spiritual leaders give the lead in this

direction we shall get rid of the excrescence while retaining the Ultimate Truth, which is as true as human nature itself.

Our assemblage has got the possibility of telling the world that in certain ways by following certain doctrines and by following a path of life, and if all people have this tolerance, charity, comprehension and discernment of the other men's point of view, world peace would be secured. That is the foundation, that is the fulcrum, and the lever by which the world can be moved. For that we have to go back to the Upaishads Damavata Datta Dayadhwam. Restraint, freedom to gifts, not merely gifts of money, but gifts of spirit and of service, and compassion—these are the things which, properly transmitted and distributed, may help to materialise our ideals. In doing all this let us remember that all this talk is not as important as actual justice, social philanthropy, actual application and the living of the life of realisation, that it is through active transmutation of your philosophy into life that this world peace can be secured. The Lord says

न कर्मणामनारम्भानेकम् पुण्ड्रेष्टुते

"Those things which result in action, which result in something those are worth pursuing and not others." Swami Sivacanda has been a true follower of that gospel.

He has laboured hard, so shall we. I have myself come to the conclusion that this talk of peace leads nowhere. We talk so much of peace. When we do not think of peace, there is no act of peace. It is through acts—simple isolated acts—of peace that the individual performs in the domain of the family, the tribe, the community, the district, the province, the nation and the world at large that world peace would come. World peace would come when people remember these lessons which have been part of our birthright, which are to essence part of the birthright of the world. It is

because we are not alive to our own heritage, we do not live a life of humility, of service By leading such a life would world peace be attained and in the attainment of the world

peace will be the consummation and the ultimate fructification of the spiritual teaching  
Swamiji I thank you for giving me the opportunity to take part in this function

## *Report of the Parliament Sessions*

The afternoon session on the first day of the Parliament commenced with an Islamic prayer by Sri Swami Sivananda

### **IS ISLAM ANTI-HUMANITARIAN**

Dr M H Syed, retired professor of the Allahabad University, who followed, pleaded that religion should not be blamed for the faults of its followers Dr Syed read a paper on 'Is Islam Anti-humanitarian?' and quoted the salient facts of the Holy Koran that Islam did not sanction violence war, condemnation of other religions and impure conduct

### **ETHICS SHOULD NOT BE DIVORCED FROM RELIGION**

Dr B L Atreya, Head of the Department of Philosophy of the Banaras Hindu University, spoke next He wished that the confusion created by the use of the word 'religion' to translate Dharma should be removed from the people's mind, and that 'ethics should not be divorced from religion' He pleaded for a scientific approach to religion as the one that would appeal to the modern mind, and asked all to

examine if science, politics and economics could solve the problems of life as effectively and completely as religion could 'Duty must come first, right must come afterwards You must do unto others as you would want to be done by others I would emphasise with all scientific arguments with all philosophical arguments, that society cannot progress without the principles of Dharma and morality being followed by the people'

### **EVERYONE IS AN UNREPEATABLE EXPERIMENT OF GOD**

Rev E St John Catchpool of the Quaker Movement, who presided over this session of the Parliament of Religions, in a brief bo-



Sri Swami Sivananda with devotees and delegates on the bank of the Ganges

inspiring speech said, "There is a job which each of us can do, whether we are people of importance or of no importance at all. Each one of us is an unrepeatable experiment of God. God has a Master Plan. We have our part to play. If we fail to play our part God's Great Master Plan is just that little bit incomplete and we have failed." Rev. Catchpool also explained in brief the aims and ideals of the Quakers and revealed that he had planned to open fifty or more Youth Hostels in India.

Swami Nirmalji then gave a fiery discourse in Hindi when he explained the glory of renunciation.

#### THE TIMES NEED A CHANGE OF HEART

There was another session of the Parliament the same night (3rd April) when Sri Swami Sivananda traced the history of the Parliament of Religions in general and explained the significance of the present Parliament which was convened at a stage when a change of heart was the thing needed to ensure world peace.

#### INDIA'S TRUE MISSION IS TO DELIVER

##### HER MESSAGE TO THE WORLD

Sri N C Chatterjee, President of the Hindu Mahasabha, who happened to come to Rishikesh to have Darshan of Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, was requested by the organisers to address the audience. He said, during the course of his brief address that "we wanted independence for a purpose. Our purpose was not political exploitation. We wanted freedom because we thought that we had certain spiritual truths to preach, certain message which was good not merely for India, but for the whole of mankind. India should achieve her true and noble mission by disseminating this message. In that mission God Intoxicated men like Swami Sivanandaji should give us a real lead. For that lead we are looking forward."

With prayer by Sri Swami Sivanandaji, during the course of which he wove his wholesome spiritual instructions in the form of

melodic songs, the first day's session came to a close.

A number of delegates spoke during the morning session of the Parliament on 4th April.

Brahmachari Prokash Das of the Yogoda Satsanga, Calcutta, explained the aims and ideals of the Satsanga and its American counterpart, the Self-realisation Fellowship, founded by the late Paramahansa Yogananda.

#### GOD'S NAME IS TRUTH

Sardar Bahadur Balwant Singh Puri said in his speech "Sikhism, founded by Guru Nanak, believes in but one God, the Creator, whose Name is Truth. The doctrines of Sikhism are intended to inculcate gratitude for the favours received, philanthropy, loyalty, honesty and all the moral and domestic virtues which are also upheld by other religions." He also gave an outline of the humanitarian services rendered by the Red Cross Society.

#### THE INDIAN ARMY LIVES UP TO THE IDEALS OF SWAMI SIVANANDAJI

General Yadunath Singh explained in a stirring speech that the Indian Army held before itself the great ideals placed before them by Sri Swami Sivanandaji.

H.H. Sri Kshemarawami of Nave Kalyan Math, Dharwar, gave a succinct analysis of the Vedic Sanatana Philosophy.

H.H. Sri Vyasa Maharaj, Sri S P Jain Nassim of Delhi, Sri H J Hehlutzel of Switzerland, Sri Hau Raj Maharaj and the Brahmanakumaris of Mt. Abu also spoke during this session.

#### TO REALISE GOD IS THE PURPOSE OF THE HUMAN BIRTH

During the afternoon, on the 4th April, Sri Jayadev Goenka of the Gita Press Gorakhpur emphasised that the purpose of human birth "is neither enjoyment of objects here nor the attainment of heaven hereafter." He continued "We should strive to realise God, which is the purpose of human birth here. This can be done only through leading a life of Dharma. What-

ever happens one should not swerve from the path of Dharma' Dwelling upon the need for constant Nama Smaran Sri Jayadayaaji said 'Those who think of Him constantly, get that intellect that leads them to the lotus feet of the Lord' Sri Goenkaji asked the audience not to imagine that the Kali Yuga is heretofore of all good, if it had its disadvantages it had its advantages too For, in this Kali Yuga God can be attained easily by repeating His Name 'We are born in a great land Bharatavarsha, in a great age, Kali Yuga and as human beings the crown of creation Let us make the best use of such birth by practising Dharma and attaining God realisation, he concluded

#### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SILENCE SUPREME

Sri Swami Purushottamaoandaji of Vashushta Guha, in the course of a speech, explained the significance of Silence Supreme 'What is Brahman?' he asked and continued 'Raso Vo Sah it is the Essence, Bhiss We are seeking happiness Rasa But we do not know where to find it The world has gone mad having drunk deep the intoxicating wine of delusion' Speaking about the Path to the Attainment of Infinite Bliss the Swami said 'when the mind goes beyond the objects there is Ananda and the image of God is reflected there But, it is not able to do so, for its energy is leaking through the means of the Indriyas Jnana Indriyas and Karma Indriyas We can, on the contrary gain more energy from the cosmic source through these very agents Let not the eyes see evil things, but see only what is good and holy Let not the ears hear evil things, but only soul elevating words and scriptures For doing this you should have control over the mind and the senses this control is Tapaa which leads you to Self realisation'

Sri Prem Mohan Varma of Allahabad then read a learned paper on Vedanta

Sri V T Neelakantan who spoke next paid glowing tributes to Sri Swami Sivanandaji and said "Swami Vivekananda had to go to America and endure untold hardships in order to take part in the Parliament of Religions But today Swami Sivanandaji has brought Chicago to India"

Yogi Shuddhananda Bharatiar, who presided over the 5th session of the Parliament, then delivered his presidential address during the course of which he dealt with the fundamental teachings of all the religions of the world

#### SPIRITUAL ARMY OF SIVANANDA

The Parliament assembled again at night when Sri Balraj Trikha, a young disciple of Sri Swami Sivanandaji, delivered a fiery speech during the course of which he pleaded for the establishment of the S A S (Spiritual Army of Sivananda) 'Be sincere to yourself,' he said, "and if you then follow the teachings of Sri Swami Sivanandaji you can become a super-Vivekananda a super Rama Tirtha"

#### THE SUPRA-MENTAL PLANE OF ANANDA KUTIR

Sri Dewan Bahadur K.S. Ramaswami Sastriji who followed him, said "I have been among the many here these two days, feeling as if one is living in the supra mental plane! What is the kind of intoxication that this God-man of Rishikesh, Sri Swami Sivananda, is able to infuse in us weak mortals!" Explaining the feelings of those who attended the Parliament, Sri Sastriji said 'The thought that rises in every heart is 'I have seen Swamiji, and I can describe him to others'

#### SILENCE IS THE MYSTIC ELEMENT COMMON TO ALL OF US

Dr Thomas Rausch then spoke on 'Silence' He said 'Every real, true religion contains the mystic element Silence is mystic Silence has taken a great place in Hinduism, and in the teachings of the great mystics of the middle ages in Europe and among the

Sufists of Islam Modern man has lost his inner battle, he has lost his balance We havn't got a wonderful invention, the radio . it troubles us by its noise and it robs us of our will. Silence is the way to express God, the Infinite . there is no class of substance to which Brahman belongs Therefore, it cannot be defined by word, it is the oce before which world recoils It can be described only by Silence Supreme Silence is of three kinds—silence of the tongue, silence of the mind and silence of the will When we attain this Silence we reach what has been described by nearly every speaker at this Parliament as the last aim of a human being

Sri G. S N Morti then spoke on the Gandhian ideals. Sri Ushe of the Upaseni Kanyakumari Sthan then read a message from H.H. Sri Saty Godavari Mata, the head of the Kanyakumari Sthan, Sakori, in the course of which she said, "There is only one way to peace and that is the way of religion The living Reality is to be experienced in daily life This is the prime purpose of human birth "

#### KILL THE ENEMY, 'THE LOWER MIND'

Sri Vijayalakshmi who followed next spoke on 'Silent Practice' She said 'The silent hills, the majestic Ganga, all nature in fact suggest more than they appear From time immemorial, life in the spirit has been held in greater reverence than life in the flesh My master, Sri Swami Sivananda says "Life here is transitory, it fades like the rainbow or the impressions on water Yet man thinks that there is pleasure in objects This is Maya's trick" People who have realised this seek after that Ahode where they can get unallied pleasure This was the quest that drove Lord Buddha from his regal palace to the forest It was this that led my master from Malaya to Himalaya to live the desireless, pure life that leads to Nirvana Maya or the desire filled mind is the greatest hindrance for God realisation Kill this enemy, the lower mind, then you

can have a glimpse of the glory of the Eternal That is the goal of all religion, by whatever name you may call that religion "

Sri Vijayalakshmi continued, "Religion is the ladder with the help of which we can climb the pinnacle of Emancipation The spiritual current is everywhere The Kingdom of God is within you To realise this we need a spiritual Master That spiritual Master is our Master, Sri Swami Sivananda "

#### UNION OF HEARTS

Major General A N Sharma, one of the Convenors of the Parliament, said in his speech "Through the grace of the Lord and the sage of Ananda Kutir, we have come to feel that our hearts are sooted The time for talk is past Only the God realised sages can do good to humanity, we can only do service And that is sufficient for us "

#### DISCIPLINE YOURSELF

In his soul stirring lecture which concluded the day's session of the Parliament Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj said 'You have heard many lectures You must be self disciplined For only then can you attain Brahmabhava

"Do it through Nama Smaran Repeat Om, or Om Mani Padme Hum, or Bismilla Ir rahman or Hail Jesus Hearing lectures will only amuse the ears You must maintain the spiritual diary You must introspect You must turn the gaze within yourself.

"Man is deluded He has no time for introspection He is a Dheera who has understood the nature of the universe, who lives in accordance with Patanjali's maxim Sarvam Dulham Vivekananah The pleasures of this world only look like pleasure in the beginning, they are painful in the end Agre Amritopanam Parinama Vishamira.

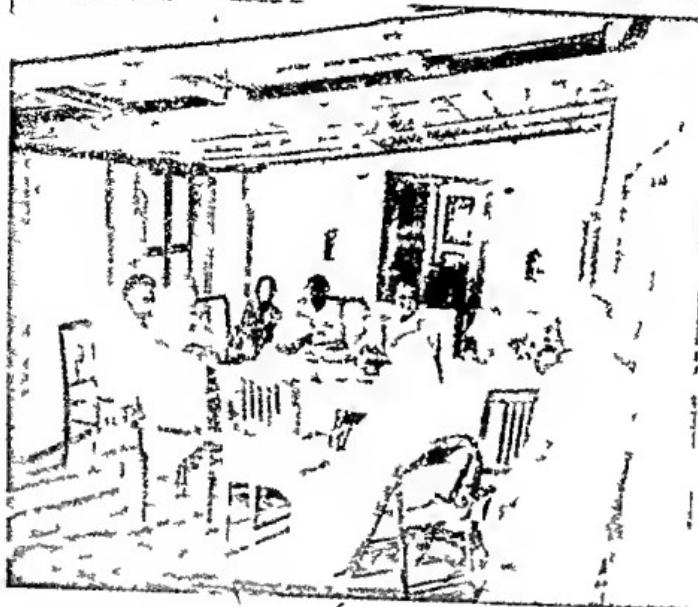
#### FIND OUT WHERE REAL HAPPINESS LIES

.. "Not merely talking high philosophy, but a real recognition of the spiritual and the ethical values is needed You must find out where real happiness lies, what is the nature of

ARRIVING TO INAUGURATE THE PARLIAMENT



Sri Swami Sivanandaaji Maharaj accompanied by Dr C. T. Ianaas a n Iijar President of the  
the inaugural session of the Parliament of Religions (second from right) and Major General  
I N Sharma (retired) one of the con enors (extreme right) is arriving at the pandal



*Sri Swami Sivaneanda receives some of the delegates*

Dr M Hafiz Syed, Sri Balraj Trikha, Kumari Manorme Brimati Krishna Kumari and Sri K Srinivasan of Alleppey, then paid, on behalf of the audience, glowing tributes to Sri Swami Sivaneada and the Divine Life Society for the excellent manner in which the Parliament had been conducted and for the hospitality that was extended to all the delegates and visitors to the Parliament.

"I have had a rebirth after coming here on the 3rd," said Sri Balraj. "There is perfect freedom of speech and unlimited charity here," said Sri Manorme.

#### HUMANITY LEARNS FROM ONE PROPHET AFTER ANOTHER

Sri Samimi of Iran then dealt with both Zoroastrianism and the Babi faith. He deplored the attitude of 'those who profess religion but who in the name of religion and patriotism, are manufacturing atoms bombs.'

He said 'If we don't ourselves understand and practise religion we will make others run away from religion' Sri Samimi continued 'We forgot the progressive nature of religion. We think of religion as a historical event, not as a functional event' Sri Samimi likened this progressive character of religion to the growth of the child 'The main idea in our attitude to a child is that we should help him grow. The language in which you speak to the child differs from time to time. You do not speak

to the adult in the language in which you spoke to him when he was a child. Similarly, when this child, humanity, overgrows the teachings of certain prophet then another teacher is sent to it. While there is nothing wrong with the teachings of the previous teachers, we need a fresh teaching. We make the mistake that the older religions are not good. We feel too that the religions that came after the ancient ones are not good either. That is wrong' Sri Samimi continued

#### RELIGION CANNOT GO HAND IN HAND WITH SUPERSTITION

'If mankind centuries ago had been presented with the theories that we are familiar with today, there would have been chaos. The school student of today knows much better than the philosophers and scientists of the first century A.C. The same God who has shown the way up to now, through whose power the prophets have been enabled

to create civilisations will continue to be the source from which prophets will arise in future and give birth to newer and newer civilisations. The finality of any teaching is illegitimate. Religion can not go hand in hand with superstition and prejudice. The one condition for religious and spiritual progress is the unfettered search for Truth and the abolition of prejudice."



A group demonstration of Yoga Asanas, which was witnessed by the delegates on the first day of the Parliament

Sri Samimi also read a paper on the fundamental principles of the Bahai faith.

"I am extremely glad that the Parliament of Religions has been convened under the auspices of Swami Sivananda who has been devoting himself for over twenty five years to the cause of telling us what we ought to do," said Sri Anantanayagam Ayyangar, Deputy Speaker of the House of the People who addressed the Parliament of Religions at Sivanandashram, Rishikesh, on the 5th April.

#### THE FUNDAMENTAL TENETS OF THE UNIVERSAL RELIGION

During the course of a learned address, Sri Ayyangar traced the fundamental tenets of universal religion and the path laid out to be trodden by every man and woman. "We are all one in that we all believe in the existence of a Spirit, the various names and forms are its manifestations. Should we accentuate the differences, or should we find the internal unity within ourselves?" enquired Sri Ayyangar.

"Everyone seeks happiness. But what is that happiness, and what are the means to attain that happiness?" asked the learned speaker and explained that it was the immature man who thought pleasures lay in objects. "Today when we have grown older, the playthings of childhood no longer interest us. In this body which is perishable there is the soul which continues to exist and transmigrate from body to body, till the man sees 'Whatever may come, and whatever may go, it does not affect the soul'." Sri Ayyangar exhorted the audience to direct their attention to that soul.

#### THE HUMANITY IS MY GOD SERVICE IS MY WORSHIP

"Humanity is my God, Service is my worship. Every man, in whatever walk of life he may be if he does his duty in a spirit of service, not in a spirit of exploitation, he has a registered place in the kingdom of heaven. The other who tries to exploit others, he goes down into the abyss of darkness" declared Sri Ayyangar.

A VIEW OF THE PARLIAMENT'S INAUGURAL SESSION



Dr C P Ramaiah Aiyar delivering his inaugural address (left) Sri Suman Shanmuda chief convener and Sri C Ghosh chairman of the reception committee On the right is general view of the delegates attending the inaugural session

that supreme happiness that you enjoy during deep sleep? Then you were in communion with the Supreme Self—Brahma or the Absolute. But, you were not conscious of It. In Samadhi you will enjoy that Supreme Bliss consciously. He is a Vichara Purusha who thinks of all these. He is a Dheera Purosha who does not depend on bank balance but is intent on attaining this Supreme Bliss. He who is endowed with Vichara Sakti is the greatest man in the world. The objects of the world cannot tempt him.

#### BE A DHEERA

"Such a Dheera is fit to enter the spiritual path. He who takes to the spiritual path out of his own inner conviction not after reading books, he will attain the goal. Then a little Japa, self analysis, meditation in Brahma-muhurta, selfless service and Kirtan will enable you to enjoy that Supreme Bliss."

"Kill all desires to become a Dheera. Who is free from desire in this world! A district judge wants to become a High Court Judge. A millionaire desires that he should become a multi millionaire. Beggars! The desireless Sadhu is the King of kings, the ruler of the greatest Kingdom on earth. But if his heart is torn by desires he is the beggar of beggars."

"Nachiketas was such a Dheera. Lord Yama offered him all kinds of enjoyments. But Nachiketas was not tempted. Long life, much wealth, damsels, bungalows and cars—nothing could tempt him. Then Lord Yama had to initiate Nachiketas into Brahma Vidya."

"Among the ancient women, too, there were Dheeras. Maitreyi, Madalasa, Gargi Chudalal were the great pioneers of the womanhood of India."

"God has given you intellect. You must discriminate and find out. Can these objects of this world give me peace and satisfaction? Otherwise, you are only doing intellectual

ramination and nothing further."

#### 'DISCRIMINATE'

"The Dheera Purusha who thus discriminates, sees that the world is a mere nothing—he refuses to be hoaxed by its wiles. He attains Immortality. To Immortality, or Atma-Jnana, you will get everything."

The Parliament re-assembled at 8 a.m., on the 5th April. Yogi Gauri Prasad presided over this session.

#### PROPHETS TEACH US: HOW TO LEAD THE DIVINE LIFE

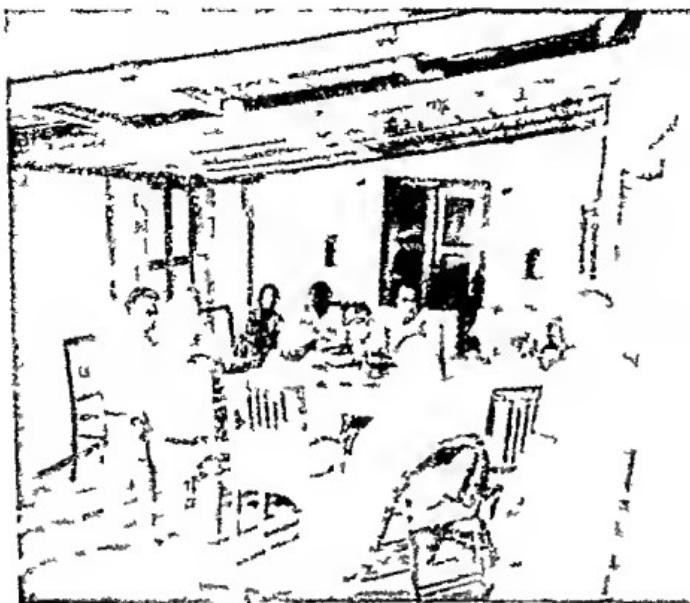
Dr Ishwar Singh, M.B.B.S., of Dehra Dun, read a paper on Sikhism during the course of which he pointed out the fundamental beliefs of the Sikh religion. 'Prophets are one with God. God reveals Himself to Prophets. Prophets come to this earth to deliver His Message and to preach to the people of this earth how to lead the divine life.'

#### MORALITY HAS BECOME HYPOCRISY

Pandit Thakur Datta Sharma of Dehra Dun read an inspiring paper in which he had sounded a clarion call that men should devote himself to the cultivation of virtues. He stressed that 'without religion there would always be degeneration of ethical culture. So long as people do not believe in God, they will indulge in vice.' Sri Sharma regretted that "morality has become hypocrisy now! People pretend to be one thing and do something else. If you wish to destroy the world, disbelieve in God and develop evil qualities," he warned.

#### EMOTIONAL 'IMBALANCE.'

During the course of his speech, Sri Dalip Singh of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of India and Burma, said 'Material power that man has acquired now gives him the power to provide great material amenities for himself, at the same time creating an emotional imbalance. This emotional imbalance goads him to destroy rather than construct." He, therefore pleaded for a spiritual outlook upon life.



**Swami Sivananda receives some of the delegates**

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### WE ARE SPARKS OF DIVINITY

"Let us follow any road that leads to God. All the paths lead to the same goal. If, in this Conference, we create the impression that we are all human beings first and human beings last, that we are all sparks of divinity and that divinity is one and indivisible, we have done our duty," said Sri Ayyangar and exhorted the followers of all religions to attend the important festivals of each other's religion.

### TASTE THE SUGAR YOURSELF

Sri Ayyangar laid great stress on the practical aspects of all religions and asked everyone to practise before questioning the validity of the teachings of the prophets. "Taste the sugar yourself," concluded Sri Ayyangar.

His Excellency Dr Soedarmo Indonesian Ambassador in India was also present during the 7th session of the Parliament.

The 7th session concluded with the recitation of prayers of the various religions by the professors of the Mahadevi Kanya College, Dehra Dun, from Sri Swami Sivananda's book,

"Gems of Prayers," and Kirtan by Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj.

The 8th session of the Parliament was addressed by Mahamandaleswar Sri Chaitanya Giri of Kailash Ashram, Rishikesh, Sri Swami Sarvanandaji Maharaj and Mahamandaleswar Sri Swami Gangeshwaranandaji Maharaj.

The delegates to the Parliament took part in the inauguration of the Leprosy Clinic by H E Sri K. M. Munshi, the Governor of Uttar Pradesh.

### FILM SHOW AND INSPIRING KIRTANS

The last (9th) session of the Parliament was preceded by a film show of Yoga Asanas and the activities of the Divine Life Society to which the delegates were entertained. During this session, which concluded at 3 a.m., on the 6th April, 1953, a number of speakers addressed the gathering. The speakers were Devan Babadur K S Ramaswami Sastryar, Prof N K Srivastava, Sri Advani Dr Gope Gurhax Sri N C Rajagopalachariar, Sri Swami Ananda Moni of Rewari and Sri Bhadra. The session concluded with Sri Swami Sivanandaji's inspiring Kirtan and Bhajan at the close of which he himself thanked the delegates visitors and volunteers individually, for their part in making the Parliament of Religions a success.

## Governing Body of the Parliament

### CONVENORS

Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati,  
Founder President, Divine Life Society  
Dr Sri C P Ramaswamy Aiyar,  
Vice Chancellor, Annamalai University,  
Madras State  
Major General Amarnath Sharma,  
Retd. D.M.S., Indian Army  
Yogi Sri Shuddhananda Bharati,  
Founder Shuddha Sanmarga Nilayam,  
Vadalar, Madras State

### RECEPTION COMMITTEE

Sri Nitin Chandra Ghosh, M.A.,  
Titaghur Paper Mills, Calcutta,  
Sri Swami Chidananda  
Gen Secretary, Divine Life Society  
Prof Nanda Kishore Srivastava M.A., LL.B.,  
Viswa Bharati College, Delhi  
Prof Pushpa Anand, M.A.,  
Mahadevi Kanya Vidyalaya, Dehra Dun  
Sri P K Vinayaga Mudaliar,  
Proprietor, "My Magazine of India"

**SUBJECTS COMMITTEE**

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 Sri Hira Lal Mehta, B.A., LL.B.,  
 Solicitor, Bomhay  
 Dr Mohammed Hafiz Syed, M.A., D.Litt.,  
 Retd Professor, Allahabad University.

Dr Ishwar Singh, M.B.B.S., Dehra Dun  
 Sri Swami Venkatesananda,  
 Editor 'Forest University Weekly'  
 Sri Swami Chidananda,  
 General Secretary, Divine Life Society

*The Delegates*

H H Yogi Shuddhaocuda Bharati,  
 Shuddha Sanmarga Nilayam, Vadular,  
 Sri Kumareswamy, Nava Kalyana Mott,  
 Dharwar,  
 Vibhuti Jyoti Swami Nityananda Kavishwar,  
 Kotaguri,  
 Sri Prokas Das and Sri H.J. Hablotzsi  
 Yogoda Satsang and Self realisation  
 Fellowship, U.S.A.,  
 Sri Ananda Muni, Bhagwat Bhakti Ashram,  
 Rewari,  
 Sri Swami Purushottamanandaji, Vasishta Gohi,  
 Mahamandaleshwar Sri Swami Chaitanya Giri  
 Kalas Ashram, Rishikesh,  
 Mandaleshwar Gaogeshanandaji Maharaj,  
 Vrindahan,  
 Sri Swami Nirmalji Maharaj, Haridwar,  
 Sri Jaya Dayal Goenka, Gita Press Gorakhpur,  
 Sri Hans Maharaj, Divine Life Mission, Delhi,  
 Rev John E St Catchpool  
 Friends International Centre, Delhi  
 Sri N G Chatterjee, President,  
 Hindu Maha Sabha  
 Sardar Dalip Singh, Spiritual Assembly of  
 Bahais in India and Burma,  
 Sardar Bahadur Balwant Singh Puri, CIE,  
 OBE, Secretary General, Indian Red Cross  
 Society,  
 Sri Usha Devi and Sri S. R. Tipnis,  
 Saty Godavari Kanya School, Sakore,  
 Brahmakumaris of Mount Abu.

Sri S P Jain, International Cultural Forum,  
 Dalbi,  
 Sri Raghavacharyaji, Founder, Darshan Maha  
 Vidyalaya, Rishikesh,  
 Sri Balraj Trikha, M.A., LL.B., Meerut,  
 Sri Om Prakash Sharma, Bharati Association,  
 Ghaziabad,  
 The President and the members of the Guru  
 Dwar, Rishikesh,  
 Sri Hem Chand Jain, World University  
 Roundtable, Los Angeles,  
 Prof K. R. R. Sastry, M.A., M.L.,  
 Allahabad University,  
 Dr Mohammed Hafiz Syed, M.A., D.Litt.,  
 Allahabasd,  
 Dr B L Atreya M.A., D.Litt.,  
 Provost, Banaras Hindu University,  
 Sri C P RamaSwamy Aiyar  
 Vice Chancellor, Annamalai University,  
 Madras,  
 Prof Hsiang Knang, Delhi University,  
 Hn Anantassayanam Ayyangar, Deputy  
 Speaker, House of the People, New Delhi,  
 Sri N C Ghosh, M.A., Calcutta,  
 Pandit Thaknr Datta Sharma, Dehra Dun,  
 Major General A N Sharma (Retd.), Delhi,  
 Major General Yadunath Singh, M.V.O.,  
 Sri Prem Mohan Varma, Advocate, Allahabad,  
 Dewan Bahadur K. S. RamaSwamy Sastry,  
 Retired Judge, Madras,  
 Dr Gope Gurbar, Ph.D., LL.B., Delhi

Dr. Thomas Ransch, Ph.D., Vienna ;  
 Sri Gauri Prasad, Retired Judge, Swarga Ashram ;  
 Sardar Ishwar Singh, M.B. B.S., Dehra Dun ;  
 Sri C.S.N. Moorthy, Editor, "Bapu," Kharagpur ;  
 Sri Motiram Advani, Asst. Commissinner of Income Tax, Poona ;  
 Sri Poshpa Anand, and the teaching staff of the Mahadevi Girls' College, Dehra Dun ;  
 Prof. Nanda Kishore, M.A., LL.B., Delhi ;  
 Srimati Vijayalakshmi, Madras ;  
 Sri S.V. Venkateswaran, Calcutta ;  
 Sri Chhedi Lalji, Lucknow ;  
 Rao Sabeh A. V. Raman, New Delhi ;  
 Mrs. Molly Gwynn, Burnpur ;  
 Dr. Ramjae, Rewari ;  
 Dr. Het Ram Agarwal, M.D., former Principal of Medical College, Amritsar ;  
 Sri R. L. Magon, Shillong ;  
 Mrs. Mathura Bai Kagai, M.B.B.S.  
 Sri M.S. Nair, Cochin,  
 Sri Brij Bhari Lal Kapur, Bareilly ;  
 Sri Govindaraju Satyanarayan, Advocate, Guntur ;  
 Sri Brij Bhari Lal, Advocate, Sibaraapur ;  
 Sri C. Alavandariah and Sri Subramanyam, Divine Life Society, Madras ;  
 Acharya and Mrs. Janaki, Editor, 'Wealth and Welfare,' Bangalore ;  
 Mrs. Helena Maxfield, U.S.A. ;  
 Sri Shanta Duara, M.A., L.T., Delhi,  
 Sri Umakant Shukla, Hajipur ;  
 Mrs. Sita Bai, Delhi ;  
 Sri K. Muniswamy Naidu, Golden Rock,  
 Sri E. Gopalakrishnamoorthy, Madras ;  
 And many other devotees from various parts of India,

## The Managing Committee

*Chief Organizer :* Sri Swami Paramananda  
*Members :* Major-General A.N. Sharma  
 Sri Swami Chidananda  
 Sri Swami Krishnananda  
 Sri Swami Venkatesananda  
 Sri Swami Madhavananda  
 Sri Swami Sadananda  
*Assistants :* Sri Swami Bhumananda  
 Sri Swami Raghunathananda  
 Sri Swami Gopalananda  
 Sri Swami Vivekananda

*Finance and Provisions.* Sri A K.K. Nambiar I.N.  
 Sri Nair, I.N  
 Sri Malayappa  
*Mess Deptt.* Sri Swami Narayana  
 Sri Swami Poornabodhendra  
 Sri Swami Keshavananda  
 Sri Swami Shuddhananda  
 Sri Swami Govindananda  
 Sri Swami Nirmalananda  
 Sri Swami Chidghanananda

## **Chapter Two**

### **NEED FOR A RELIGIOUS PARLIAMENT**

# *The Spirit of the Parliament*

DR HARIDAS BHATTACHARYA M A PHD

[Calcutta University]

Unlike other Parliaments which are associated with state legislation and government, a Parliament of Religions has certain very common features. It is not a gathering where party leaders meet to discuss any item of legislation, vote thereon and agree to abide by the decision of the majority of members present. Nor is it an assembly convened to discuss matters that are intimately connected with the regulation of the lives of the citizens of a particular state. Very often it is not even a meeting convened to discuss doctrinally items of belief of any religion. What a Parliament of Religion generally does is to bring together people of different religious persuasions and to invite expositions of the fundamentals of different faiths.

Sometimes in the interests of a comprehensive survey the absence of the adherents of the faith concerned to speak on their own religions has been made good by inviting experts, who do not themselves profess the religion they expound, to contribute to the discussion even at the risk of getting an unsympathetic handling of the theme. When definitely convened for detecting the vulnerable points of other religions and directing the onslaught of different missionaries against these weak positions a Parliament of Religion degenerates into a conclava if the criticisms are fair and into a conspiracy when the plans of attack are basely conceived and are meanly executed. In such missionary gatherings there is a great scope for frank discussion and an agreed line of attack may be evolved by mutual consultation or, if necessary by some system of voting.

A gathering of a still narrower compass is known in the Christian world where, in the early centuries, various ecumenical councils

met to settle the dogmas of the Christian faith to condemn heretical views and to anathematize the rebels of the Church. Such protective measures have been found necessary in every infant church threatened with antinomianism and schism of any kind. To stop fissiparous tendencies that tend to break up the unity and purity of an infant institution that probably arose as a protest against a decaying faith, a considerable amount of heart searching is necessary to discover the weak lines in the crust of the new faith and to adopt defensive measures for sheer self preservation. A small religious community can ill afford to have dissenters seceders and apostates.

## **RELIGION MUST BE EVER PROGRESSIVE**

Even in Buddha's life time differences about monkish practices could not have prevented and stern warning had to be issued against the lapses of certain cities and individuals. The danger becomes greater when the living voice of the Founder of the faith is hushed for ever and his message becomes subject to divergent interpretations at the hands of a postarity which feels relieved by the removal of the burden of iron discipline or which still hugs in the unconscious fondness for the discarded creed or which is incapable of living at the high altitude of a noble religion and breathes more freely in the lower plains of culture.

Is it not a Semitic complaint that, though God gives a perfect religion to man through His prophets later generations always manage to adulterate divine inspirations with human inventions and corrupt the revelations of God? Did not the Yahwehists the Elohists the Deuteronomists and the Priestly School revise the Old Testament from their own points of view?

Do not the Mahayanaists accuse the Hinayanaists of want of understanding, so that the mystic messages of the Master were unheeded and Buddhism converted into a mere moralism to the exclusion of the transcendental elements that Buddha's teaching included, and did they not thereby change the character of early Buddhism?

Was not Jainism modified by the incorporation of elements from the theistic Brahmanic faith? Was not Zoroastrianism similarly affected when the Yazatas returned to popular affection after being banished from the faith of the founder? Did not the Prophets of Israel inveigh against the polytheistic and idolatrous lapses of the Jews? Is Islam true to its creed when it permits veneration of saints? How do Mariolatry and worship of saints go with strict Christian monotheism?

It appears, therefore, that a homogeneous faith is difficult to maintain with the extension of the church, and that is why every religion has to be periodically reviewed to detect if any undesirable tendencies are developing in theory or practice.

#### DIVISIONS ARE INEVITABLE

In spite of the zeal of the orthodox however, most religions have developed fissions. Islam divided into Shias and Sunnis on the question of succession to the headship of the church. Buddhism divided religiously into Hinayana and Mahayana and philosophically into a score of rival schools. Jainism parted on the question ofinity of the founder of the faith and certain consequential principles and rights, i.e., Svetambara and Digambara. Christianity has the major rift into Catholics and Protestants. Brahmanism not only developed the distinction between Vedic and Panoptic religions but also into a number of sectarian cults like Vaishnavism, Saivism, Saktism, etc., and even subdivisions within each major sect. Even within Judaism different sectarian beliefs as among the Sadducees and

the Pharisees grew up.

If we take into account minor distinctions the number of religious sects within each church would run into a pretty good number. In the United States of America there are today more than 250 established religious sects or denominations. Thus, with our modern search after a unitary God, we have joined a multiplicity of approach, and now that most States do not control the Church within their domain, freedom of worship has multiplied the methods of worship. The days of theocratic control of the State are almost over all over the world and those who are still trying to bring medievalism back to their State would soon learn that the hand of the time clock can not be moved back by outside force.

#### NEED FOR SOBER CONSIDERATION

None of us were present at the christening or *namakarana* ceremony of the Supreme Being, and yet how foolishly we quarrel about naming Him! Was God Yahweh or Elohim or El Shaddai? Is He Allah with eighty nine excellent names in addition? Or is He Ahura Mazdah with a multiplicity of appellations like Allah? Is He male or female, Siva or Sakti? Or is He Vishnu? If so, is He Narayana or Hari or Rama or Krishna? Even if within a particular religious denomination we arrive at an agreed name, how are we to solve the quarrel on the subject among different religious groups? Or shall we drop naming Him and give Him only a descriptive epithet or reduce Him to a non personal Brahman or Absolute, and would that satisfy the cravings of the devout heart? Shall we believe that He can be worshipped in a symbol or shall we make Him formless altogether? Should there be any House of God and, if so, what would be its distinctive architectural feature? When in the day and night shall we worship Him and according to what methods of bodily movement? Is He pleased with work, or moved by prayer, or reached through meditation?

To all these perplexing questions a straight forward answer would be difficult to give. We believe according to the tradition of our social group, and all that we do is to end by postulating a single God and making distinctions among His children, calling the faithful in our own way brothers and stigmatizing the votaries of other faiths as imps of Satan. This belief may either add to our zeal to convert the unregenerate if we are anxious in our love to save souls, or it may prompt us to choose the shorter and swifter path of annihilating the infidels, or it may give us the consoling thought that while our own souls are safe, eternal perdition awaits the unbelievers in our method of religious faith and practice. If we believe in absolute *laissez faire* in religion, we may, according to our mood, either believe that, since we are not our brother's keepers his spiritual future is no concern of ours or think that, as every view is an avenue to God, no soul would fail to reach a das rabbha spiritual end. We may be either extreme monotheists or we may be monolatrists holding the view that God has distributed the other gods among other nations for their benefit or their undoing that great crude worshippers are not devoid of the redeeming mercy of God or that they have been damned by God by a kind of vindictive decree.

(L. to R.) The Hon'ble Anantakayonam Ayyangar, Deputy Speaker of the House of the people, H. E. Dr. Sardarannan, former Indonesian Ambassador in India and His Holiness Sri Swami Sivananda at one of the sessions of the World Parliament of Religions.

#### DIFFERENCE IN ATTITUDE

It is obvious that a bigot will have nothing to do with a Parliament of Religions except to use it as a platform for propaganda of his own particular religion. If the rules forbid the criticism of other faiths, subtle comparisons, much to the advantage of one's own religion, will indirectly serve the purpose of criticism. It would be difficult to rule out all comparisons, but unless care is taken, to prevent odious comparisons, discussion may degenerate into acrimonious debate and defeat the very purpose of bringing together people of different denominations on a common platform. Even within these limitations enough scope is left for presenting the attractive features of every religion to interest the audience and make it furiously think about the imperfections of this or that creed.

Where faiths are represented by their own adherents, the presentations are naturally coloured by unconscious partiality or conscious commendation. Religion, unlike philosophy, has an emotional core, and that is why it is more difficult for general acceptance than the



latter. Into religious belief enter not only rational thinking and ethical conduct but also social traditions in theory and practice, childhood impressions, long established habits, and fondly cherished sentiments. According to the degree of our personal conviction the presentation of the tenets of our religion takes the form either of a genuine justification of our faith or a rationalization of our prejudices or a compensation for our scepticism.

A true expositor has to combine the virtues of devotion and learning, of ethical perception and critical reasoning. He must be able to separate the grain from the chaff, the eternal from the evanescent elements, the social framework to support practices from the spiritual essence whereon kindred souls are united in worship. A candid examination of the essentials of faith of advanced religious shows that we are more divided by dress, mode of worship, ceremonies, odd habits and social organization than by genuine religious feeling. Mysticism, for instance, cuts across all religious boundaries, and the man of God, in spite of their denominational differences, are more akin to one another than persons following nominally the same faith.

#### INHERENT TRAITS ARE UNCHANGEABLE

We wish to be surrounded by persons who behave like ourselves and so, not to incur the risk of an unquiet house, we have decreed that no intercommunal or intersectarian marriage shall take place. The days when a Jaina could marry a Saiva, or a Buddha a Saiva or a Vaishnava, are now long past in India. Though a Smarta would still worship the five major gods giving prominence, however, to his sectarian deity, there is no Harsavardhana now to worship Buddha, Siva and Surya by turn, nor a Harivisha to strike coins with the effigies of different gods. Civil marriage is still mostly confined to persons of the same established sect except when respect for personal freedom in faith or else want of faith in all faiths prompts alliance between persons nominally belonging

to different religious groups. We have aligned morality so much with religion that pure ethical and humanistic movements have to keep the path to religion open for those who want to reach out to the transcendental either as a supplement or as a buttress to social understanding and upright conduct.

Hence it is not easy to find expositors who would not make large claims on behalf of their particular ways of worshipping God. The only caution needed is the knowledge that no religion has been able to jettison altogether the primitive features of the milieu in which it was born and that it is improbable that these local and temporal characters would be equally acceptable with the abiding spiritual values of that religion. Of course, there is the conversa risk that, when all particularities are omitted, all religions tend to be so much alike that they almost degenerate into a philosophy or a code of morals from which the peculiar devotional element tends to evaporate or, even when this is retained, it loses its sectarian tinge.

A Christianity without the messiahship of Jesus, an Islam without the apostleship of Muhammad, a Sikhism without the Guruship of Nanak and any religion without its distinctive feature are unthinkable as such and therefore he who would accept Christianity must accept Christ and he who would accept Islam must accept its version of Divine revelation even though there are contradictions between Christianity and Islam in respect of the same sets of facts and the Quran differs also from the Old Testament in its version about identical events.

A gathering interested in the eternal things of the Spirit is likely to be impatient with the narration of the temporal and local peculiarities which a faith fails to throw off during its progress in space and time. When the world was small, local saecularities had a meaning carried down from ancient history, and comparative ignorance of other creeds tended to

invest one's own country with a peculiar sanctity. Beyond the unumscribed area all was unclean and the people too unsanctified. In India we have areas that were not trodden by the Pandavas, as the saying goes. The land originally occupied by the Aryans became the Aryavarta which is the holy land and even parts thereof were included within holy limits only at a later time. Similarly Jerusalem where the first temple was raised to Yahweh and Mecca where the ancient Arabs kept their idols in the ka'aba became holy cities. The practices of the original home of a religion set a pattern for conduct to other places where it extends.

In this way the local atmosphere of a new religion is carried over to remote places and the beliefs of earlier times of a definite geographical area are not allowed to be overthrown in favour of the beliefs of other regions to which it extends for fear that thereby the unity of the faith would be jeopardized and local customs would swamp the standard behaviour prescribed in the original message. True, no religion in contact with other faiths for a long time can escape contamination altogether, and infiltration of new ideas can be detected now in most of the religions of the world.

#### NO RELIGION IS EXCLUSIVE

The Jewish religious leaders in their Babylonian captivity either borrowed or developed in response to the beliefs of their temporary home their angelology and the idea of future life from the Zoroastrians as did the Muslims their five time daily prayer from the same source. Brahmanism has copied extensively Dravidian and Kolamian practices and beliefs in course of its conquest of new regions in India. Even at the time of its origin a new religion does not rise, like Pallas Athene from the brow of Zeus, as a full fledged system. It has its root in the antiquity of the land of its origin and very often it embodies liberally the religious traditions

of the time and the place. The Qur'an draws liberally upon Jewish and less so upon Christian scriptural sources.

No prophet can completely disown his spiritual heritage and begin with a clean slate. That is why we have a few great allied traditions in the world today—the Indo Aryan, the Semitic and the Mongolian, the last being less compact than the other two. A comparative study of the religions comprised within the same tradition reveals striking similarities of thought. It seems as if God is a respecter of geography even though He is no respecter of persons. He seems to breed polytheistic tendencies in men living in regions where Nature's variety is bewildering and monotheistic impulses where unkind nature is barren and uniform.

Whosoever, therefore, goes to a world gathering of religious denominations must be prepared to face oddities with which he is not familiar in his own country of a single type of faith. According to his interest, culture and sympathy he may be enlightened, amused or angered by the presentation of weird facts of religious life at such a gathering. Enclosed in his private faith he may pity those who are of other persuasions. In his condescension he will narrate his own religious doctrines for the benefit of the souls of the followers of other religions. He will come to teach and not learn. He will come in fact with a missionary motive either to convert or to oblige the audience with the message of his own creed, especially if he belongs to one of the proselytizing religions.

Those in whom the conversion motive can not operate because their religion is no longer a missionary religion will on the other hand, describe their tenets as a justification of their faith, pointing out why it is attractive to them personally even though here also the faith may not be determined by free acceptance but is simply inherited from ancestors. The

most interesting human document will come from one who has recounced one faith and accepted another out of a rational conviction that the new one is better. A Parliament of converts would be an interesting gathering indeed!

### AMITY, NOT DISSENSION

Whether a Parliament of Religions would be a success or a failure depends upon the spirit in which the participants share in its deliberations. If we come to peg our claims against rival faiths the main purpose of such a meeting would be lost. If we start with the idea that ours is the only true religion and that the aliens in faith are still under the domination of the devil, as was once sedulously taught by Christian missionaries, then we shall go back with the idea of forging fresh weapons of attack against other creeds, we shall then come with the idea of noticing the weak links in the armour of other faiths with a view to attack them elsewhere. We shall then be tolerant to this extent that we shall not close our ears to the expositions of other doctrines as the extreme bigots of every religion still do when they close their eyes and ears to the sights and sounds considered holy by other religions, but then we shall attend the gathering with a closed mind and a fixed heart.

In the Procrustean bed of our own religion we want to put all men because we believe that we are in exclusive possession of the word of God and it is our duty to apprise all men of the only authentic voice of God. As though our own religion has come at a dead point of time in the history of the world, we pretend to think that God has closed His lips for ever and that He would not vouchsafe fresh revelations to the expanding intellect and smity of man. The stubborn faith in a last revelation will make all religious discussions nugatory.

Men of olden times whom God chose as the vehicles of spiritual message had a limited

knowledge of the world and their sympathies were necessarily limited, too. We are more happily circumstanced in that we have a greater knowledge of the faiths of mankind and the infinite ways in which the religious minds all over the world have grappled with the problems of the spirit. We are not suggesting that worldly wisdom is necessarily connected with spiritual insight. Judged by academic standards many of the greatest prophets of the world were ignorant of secular things and even illiterate. But they, too, were finite vessels of divine revelation, and no theory of their complete sinlessness or the identity of their essence or will with that of God will be able to establish their absolute infallibility.

### OUR OBJECTIVE

No theory of inspiration or descent will make subsequent history of the world unreal and make fresh divine revelation unnecessary for untold future generations. At the same time we shall have to admit that like scientific laws spiritual laws once correctly diagnosed will stand the test of time—only that like scientific laws they may be added to or explained in terms of higher laws subsequently discovered. We have also to believe that, if there are greater spiritual luminaries, there are lesser luminaries, too and that, while prophets are few, the men of God are many.

If the Infinite has in every finite, how can we deny the potentiality of spiritual illumination to any soul? If the public path of institutional religion be brilliantly illuminated, we shall have to carry still our private lanterns of faith to illumine the alleys of our individual souls. Private religion will always supplement public faith and hers we are more dependent upon our own mental constitution. The religion that we profess with joy is one which is in line with our mental make up, and any religion that wishes to be a part of life must make allowances for the differentia-

temperament of worshippers Karma Jnana and Bhakti—ritual, meditation and devotion—do not have appeal to all minds alike

If we go away from a Parliament of Religions with the impression that in view of the divergences of faiths probably religion is an illusion of the human mind we shall carry away a very wrong impression. The call of the ideal has never been absent from the human mind at any time. It is response to that call that lifts man above his finitude. Man has discarded one religion to fall a prey to another even though sometimes he has thought that secular idealism would serve as a substitute for spiritual life. At the same time the infinite ways in which the Divine has appealed to the human mind should incline us to the view that though there is truth in

every religion no religion has the monopoly of spiritual truth

In a Parliament of Religions we may gather the scattered rays of divine manifestation in history and even appraise their relative values but we are not authorised to scoff at any faith or belittle its contribution to the uplift of humanity. Men have always been made nobler by religion in some ways even when dark rites have disfigured its practice. The task of a true reformer is the polishing of private life and not the addition of a new social organization. If an audience derives inspiration for better life from any of the religions represented in the Conference without discarding his particular socio-religious organization he will go away a better man. Let our objective be increasing the number of good men and not swelling the ranks of converts.

## A Happy Augury

SARDAR BAHAUDUR BALWANTSINGH PURI CIE ONE

[Secretary-General Ind. & Red Cross Society]

We are living in what is called the atomic age when science has reached an important landmark in its quest for conquest over nature. One sees also numerous manifestations of man's urge for progress in other departments of life which has resulted in various forms of international co-operation. On the other hand paradoxical as it may seem there are conflicts of ideologies resulting in dark clouds of mounting tension threatening to shatter the very edifice of human civilization.

The end of life is no doubt happiness but happiness does not consist in multiplying and satisfying material needs and in glorifying the ego but in making the physical life subservient

to the spiritual self. The conflict between materialism and spirituality that we see today is like one between body and soul between illusory pleasures and real happiness and in a way, between man and his Maker.

Realizing that ultimately it is the spiritual aspect of life which provides a common basis for religion and binds humanity together, the Divine Life Society is making a wonderful contribution to the pressing human problems by promoting mass spiritual awakening through this Parliament of Religions. The Society and its founder His Holiness Swami Sivananda Ji

Maharaj as well as his co-workers and supporters are to be congratulated on this effort. That such a Congregation could have been



brought about at this critical period of human history, in such delightful and soul inspiring surroundings in our country with its hoary traditions in the sphere of religion is itself an achievement and a happy augury for the success of this laudable effort.

#### RELIGION THE BASIS OF LIFE

We know that all human beings, no matter what skin they wear, what food they eat, what climate they live in, have the same qualities of head and heart. Pleasure and pain have no religious discrimination, both produce similar reactions on all human beings. The sense of right and wrong, of good and evil and in fact the whole concept of duality are common to all. It is also recognised that religion is the basis of life, that there is one Supreme Being, no matter by what name He may be called in different languages, and that He is the source of religion. As such, it should be obvious that in spite of so much diversity all religions are fundamentally the same in their ultimate objective of God realization.

#### SPIRIT OF SIKHISM

My own religion, Sikhism, founded by Guru Nanak, in the later half of the fifteenth century, believes in but one God, the Creator whose name is Truth, devoid of fear and enmity, immortal, unborn and self-existent, great and bountiful. We believe in His myriad manifestations being reflected in truth and in the right performance of duty, uncircumscribed by dogmatic rituals and formalism.

The doctrines of Sikhism are intended to inculcate gratitude for the favours received, philanthropy, loyalty, honesty and all the moral and domestic virtues which are also upheld by other religions. Sikhism also believes in the transmigration of soul and predestination which is almost universal in the East. The Divine Life Society's concept of the essence of religion, I am glad, is in accord with the catholicism of my religion.

In that catholic spirit this Parliament of

Religions has been convened. Here is a common platform to dispel pernicious misconceptions and bigotry, and promote a healthy understanding among the diverse faiths represented.

#### THE RED CROSS

Among the important tenets of religion service to humanity is recognized as of paramount importance. Of the numerous organizations engaged in social service, a well merited mention may be made of the great humanitarian institution of the Red Cross. Functioning now in 71 countries as a non political, non religious and non governmental organization, the Red Cross has rendered for 90 years succour to the sick and wounded during wars and worked for the promotion of health, the prevention of disease and the mitigation of suffering during peace.

My long association with this humanitarian organization has brought me into close contact with its national as well as international work. It has given me many a sad glimpse into large scale suffering. On the other hand, I have seen also the happy reaction that the alleviation of suffering arouses in the beneficiaries and am convinced that the Red Cross, and for that matter any humanitarian organization, has tremendous potentiality towards releasing a colossal fund of goodwill and compassion. Through disinterested service the Red Cross hopes to rekindle and foster in man the nobler sentiments and higher values of life, thus promoting conditions conducive to peace.

What the world today needs, I think, is both reorientation and reinterpretation of the existing religions and the harnessing of the goodwill of all agencies interested in making the world a happier place to live in. The Parliament of Religions has thus undertaken an extremely valuable task of spiritual as well as material significance in trying to interpret the unity of human race through mass spiritual awakening. The world will no doubt watch its endeavours with great expectations.

# Our Sacred Task

SRI HEM CHAND JAIN

[Indian Representative of International Press Agency]

The world of today is enveloped in a sort of chaos and coma, gross materialism and moral inertia. We have become so narrow and selfish and our approach to all the problems of life and living has become so very mean and materialistic that we find little time to think over the basic spiritual values of life and devote our energies towards the betterment of individual, social, national and international relationships.

It is in the fitness of things that a Parliament of Religions has now been convened at the initiative of Sri Swami Sivananda and its venue has been selected at the foot of the Himalayas, where sages and seers have sought spiritual enlightenment ever since the dawn of the Vedic civilization.

Let us with advantage draw our inspiration from the life stories and the teachings of these sages and saints who have bequeathed to us a rich heritage and a sublime culture. Let us forget all racial rivalries, provincial jealousies and religious fanaticism. Let us for a while lay aside carping criticisms of each other and the

hypocrisies of worldly life and tune ourselves with the Infinite and foster the spirit of universal love and peace. Let us treat each other as members of one, common family, with equal rights and benedictions that we owe to our Father, God Almighty.

I am sure that all the delegates to this Parliament of Religion would agree with me that our main task is to harmoniously blend the fundamental tenets of all faiths and eschew all sentiments of dissension, differences and religious animosities. Let us pull our efforts together to convey to the masses the practical knowledge of real religion and instil in them a sense of common brotherhood. Our ideals cannot bear fruit unless we ourselves become practical examples of what we intend others to be. Our appeal to the masses can be really effective only when our approach is based on a spirit of humility and selfless service. May we be united in our efforts in the fulfilment of this sacred task.

# Towards a New World-Order

SRI JOSEPH BUSBY

[Editor, *The Voice*, England]

All over the world today, there is an intense spiritual awakening. Something great above the traditional religions of the world is stirring. There is no doubt that this spiritual upsurge, an expression of inspiration from Above, marks the crossroads of humanity. Either mankind will plunge on to utter destruction or, through a complete change of heart and mind, a decision will be taken on the road towards the establishment of a true and permanent universal brotherhood on earth.

This new vision of universal brotherhood is finding expression through religious groups of every kind. All are concerned with the same main spiritual principles of true fraternal co-operation, love wisdom, freedom and peace.

During the last few years, organizations inspired with the same idea, have come into existence—Ideas identical with those of this memorable gathering in India, the Parliament of Religions, convened at Rishikesh.

various religions On the other, it, must retrace to religion its rightful place as the ennobling ideal of mankind, as the guiding factor in all human undertakings as the foremost concern of man Spiritual and religious congregations should be held more frequently than political meetings and conferences People's mind, especially the leaders' mind, should be turned more towards God and religion than towards politics and boundary making Then wars will cease for peace reigns where religion dwells

All religions should unite today for this great purpose of rallying their forces to fight out materialism and Godlessness which alone are the causes of disharmony and misery

Until materialism is wiped out of the face of the earth mankind cannot hope to enjoy permanent peace and happiness

When religion is mentioned, the modern 'enlightened' man feels that it is putting back the hands of the clock of progress he is convinced that the present materialistic civilization is an improvement upon the ancient

spiritual civilization It is a sad mistake Fortunately, many leaders of nations also have realized this Even if it is taken to mean that it is putting the clock back, we should welcome it and restore to haggard science the vigour of spiritual strength Religion alone can give to society the vitality that sustains mankind and enables man to soar into the region of divinity and realize his unity with the Supreme Principle that pervades the universe, the Brahman of the Upanishads the Father in Heaven Jehovah, Allah or Tao, the One that is called by various names and adored in various forms

I hope and pray to the Almighty Lord that the Parliament of Religions would convert every man's heart into an abode of religion that is synonymous with Dharma, with selfless service with cosmic love, with Atma Jnana May all people tread the path of virtue, reach the domain of wisdom, and shine as Jivas muktas in this very birth! May the blessings of the One God be upon all!



## *Some Principles of a World Community of Religions*

DR RAYMOND F PIPER PH.D

[Professor of Philosophy Syracuse University New York]

The paramount problem of our confused and suffering age is the establishment of a peaceful world order A century ago in Iran, Balaullah, founding prophet of the Bahai Faith declared that the fundamental purpose of religion was to promote concord and harmony

among men and nations In the realization of the sublime goal of a World Commonwealth the religions of the world may contribute at least three mighty aids

A Prophetic leader, whose wisdom grace and wit assist men to find safe, fruitful and

joyful ways to abundant life,—a life that recognizes no tradition ridden bigotries but seeks to progress towards harmony and perfection.

B *The spread of goodwill, the most precious and needful of all human goods.*

C *A creative community of religions.* This essay is an endeavor to formulate some basic principles of such a community, which are categorised as follows:

1 *A recognition of the existing plurality of religions.* While the followers of five or six religions now ardently aspire to win the rest of the world to their faiths, there is no practical likelihood that any one of these groups can convert all mankind in the next century or two. "Variety and change are as characteristic of men's religions as of their other institutions," declares John H. Randall, Jr.

The realistic acceptance of this probability is the first condition for realizing the absurdity (a) of bitter and warring conflicts among religions, and (b) of ignorance and misconceptions concerning religions other than one's own. Every religion enshrines ways of living which are "uniquely precious," and the wise religionist strives to appropriate the insights, aspirations, and joys which others have discovered. The recognition of this first principle requires mission minded religionists to do much hard and creative thinking about what kinds of relations among religions will contribute most to the attainment of peaceful solidarity among mankind.

2 *The ideal of a community of religions.* The word "community" as used here means a unity with variety, namely, a world wide association of co-operating religions whose members at once share certain common basic interests and yet endeavor to demonstrate particular values which they especially esteem. Such an association would be bipolar in operation; it would encourage both a measure of unity through universal principles and a

multitude of variety through adventurous experimentation. The advantages of such a community are suggested by a Bahá'í metaphor. "A garden displaying a richly ordered variety of plants is far more enjoyable than a garden consisting of one kind of flower." We conclude that variety in unity is much more realistic, creative, and attractive than a society which maintains a thorough, mold like uniformity.

#### COMMON ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

3 *The primary quest for common ethical principles rather than for theological agreements.* Religion manifests itself in six fundamental ways in beliefs, emotions, conduct, societies, arts and utopias. The hope of any two religions agreeing upon the meaning and practice of all six manifestations is vain. Hence we must consider the question: In which of these fields of religious expression are we most likely to realize the widest agreement and understanding?

For many reasons the best answer seems to be in conduct, in the field of ethical ideals. The ways of conduct are familiar and, therefore, more easily discerned. Righteous conduct is a requirement of every religion. It is a basic ingredient of peaceful social order. The Buddhist Bishop Arsi, once remarked, "Goodness needs no criticism or explanation; it speaks for itself." Rare is the human individual who condemns kindness, brotherly love, and goodwill.

It is easy to find universal ethical principles in the religions of mankind, such as the golden rule, the law of compensation, the love of peace. "Serious acquaintance with the great religions of mankind reveals the close sympathy of aim existing between the higher levels of our faiths, past and present" (John H. Randall, Jr.) This third principle invites religious men to share more and more in the common moral ideals they esteem.

## THE UNIFYING LINK

**4 Love as the unifying bond among religions**  
 Every existing organized religion emphasizes love, goodwill, or compassion as the primary condition for realizing an abundant and contented life. A measure of goodwill is the first condition for fruitful intercourse between religionists. As Abdul-Baha once declared: If two people argue, both are wrong, wrong because they have not first established a common friendly basis of discussion, because their concern is egoistic or dogmatic, and not devotion to unclouded truth. Love and sympathetic quest are necessary conditions for learning the truth of our neighbour's faith. The idea that mere tolerance is sufficient to gain mental understanding and co-operation is psychologically dead. It is evident that everyone of the great religions started and survived because the goodness of its founder attracted and retained disciple and friends. Growth in understanding is best promoted by outreachings brotherly association and affection.

**5 Reverence and worship are universal marks of religious men** When love is directed towards every Divine Being one believes in, it becomes adoration, reverence, and is expressed in acts of worship. Reverence is the distinctive religious emotion which is appreciated in every faith. A Chinese Christian Bishop once said how a group of men in Chnogking, China, of different religious, got acquainted and enjoyed meeting together for religious discussion. When they tried to name their company, they called it the Society of Fellow Worshippers because, they said, we may disagree in our conceptions of God but we all understand the meaning of reverence. The common function of all religions is manifest in man's quest for the Divine and in their reverent worship of what they regard as Supreme Spirit. The universal appreciation of reverence provides an emotional bond for a world community of religions.

## VARIETY IN EXPRESSION

**6 The encouragement of variety in the artistic expression of religion** From the earliest days of religion, the fine arts in all their multiplicity, including rituals, have served to express and to enhance religious values. There is no way of measuring the magnitude of the indispensable gifts of the world's religious poetry, music, temples, sculptures, paintings, eloquence and other arts, to creating, perpetuating, intensifying, and beautifying religious experiences. But the distinctive genius of fine art is to emphasize uniqueness, originality and freshness of appeal to the senses and the imagination.

Hence, an earnest endeavour to enjoy the many great artistic creations of every religion of the world will produce many humanizing and harmonizing effects upon participants, for various reasons. Enjoyment of the fine arts engenders respect for individual differences and at the same time it reveals the universal human sources of beauty in sensory stimulation, rhythmic activity, and ordered forms. When we discover familiar religious sentiments effectively expressed in artistic forms that are new to us, we know at once aesthetic delight, a fresh respect for the artists who created the designs, and a richer appreciation of the significance of those sentiments.

For example, when Fred Crane, a Christian clergyman, discovered the Altar of Heaven in Peking, he wrote an essay full of excitement and enthusiasm. He said, "The greatest religious building on earth, in my opinion, is the Alter of Heaven. I have seen most of the edifices men have put up to the glory of God. But all of them fail by a large measure to approach, in majesty and purity of conception, in sheer grandeur, in the suggestiveness of divinity, and in downright beauty and artistic appropriateness, this towering masterpiece of China. Some day when sectarianism and the strife of theologians shall have been spent, and the world turne from the

contention of logic to that 'unity of the spirit which is the bond of peace,' there shall gather about the Altar of Heaven a multitude of every race and clime, and lift their voices in one magnificent chorus of praise to the One God of all the earth."

#### INTER-EXCHANGE OF MISSIONS

7 A great increase in the interchange of ideas and visits among religionists. It is a truism that friendship is the most favourable condition for understanding and exchanging cultural values. One of my teachers, Dean W. W. Fenn of Harvard Divinity School, declared that the key to salvation is friendship. The rule of friendship applies supremely in religion where values are at once intensely personal and intensely important.

All progressive religions, therefore, need immensely to multiply opportunities for friendly relations with representatives of other faiths than their own. A valuable aid in this mutual understanding may be found in the amazing number of recent books which publish selections from the best passages of the world's many bibles. The principle of interchange is based upon the power which comes from knowing truth in any of its chief forms scientific, philosophic, aesthetic, social, or mystical.

#### NEED FOR A WORLD ORGANIZATION

8 The establishment of a world institute of religions. For the promotion of a world

community of religions, one of the most urgent and indispendable demands is the establishment of a permanent world organization, congress or parliament of religions in an ample set of buildings (libraries, assembly halls, dormitories, etc.) That State or man of wealth who erects such an architectural center for a world institute of religion will surely win for himself through the contending centuries the honour and gratitude of understanding men for providing a necessary physical instrument for promoting understanding, co-operation, federation, and harmony among the religions of the world.

In a center of this kind some of the finest leaders of all religions would be able to live together under favourable conditions for relatively long periods of time, for the purpose of investigating co-operatively the fundamental principles, both common and unique, of the world's religions, and of inventing more effective means for the creative co-operation among them in realizing the greatest needs of our time, the increase of goodwill and the solid establishment of a peaceful universal world order.

Fruitful co-operation of sincere seekers in such a world association is based upon and insured by the common respect which all religious men have for the universal values of goodness, truth, beauty and loving kindness.

## Faith and Reason

.Faith and reason are not enemies. Both are inter-dependent. Faith should not cloud reason and set up a bigoted outlook. Reason should not slay faith because faith is the very prop of life and a powerful incentive to action. For does not Gita say that "surely the doubting self goes to destruction, and neither this world, nor the beyond, nor any happiness is there for him"? Reason inspires faith, and faith enriches and justifies reason. It is wrong to imagine that there is nothing beyond reason, but without reason faith is indeed sightless and forlorn. Primary reason is the nucleus of faith, and inspired faith is the fulfilment of reason.

—Sri Swami Sivananda

# Significance of the Parliament

YOGIRAJ HARRY DIKMAN

[Latvia]

The primary goal of a religious Parliament is to promote better understanding tolerance and love among the followers of various religious sects and denominations. Half a century ago there was great intolerance between the great Christian denominations and the minor sects. Every faith claimed to be the only true one and the others to be spurious.

After the appearance of the young, dynamic Swami Vivekananda at the Religious Congress in Chicago during the close of the 19th century a more tolerant attitude began to manifest, owing to the influence of the elevating ideas of the Vedanta philosophy, which declares *Eknam Satyam Brahman Vedantam—Truth is One*, sages call it variously

Twenty years later in Boston was held a Parliament of Religious Liberals. There again was another brilliant spiritual leader from India Paramahansa Swami Yogananda.

Yoganandaji's gospel of practical Yoga drew more Americans than the intellectual philosophy of Advaita Vedanta. A great many centres of Self realization sprang up on the Western Coast of the United States of America, and numerous souls—men and women—renounced the world and lived and practised Yoga as monks and nuns in the SRF Hermitages.

What does this all mean? It means that the West intrinsically is not so materialistic as we so often imagine, and when it is so, it is

because unscrupulous people have managed to get the reins of power in their hands as political leaders and rulers of these countries. They, too, have organized many political Parliaments but either with no substantial results at all or with results which were disastrous to many millions of people as in the case of Germany and Korea. The religious Parliaments, on the other hand, have produced at least a modest amount of good results instead of sowing anything harmful for mankind.

Now we might wonder what will this religious Parliament, held in the holy town of Rishikesh, at the foot of the hoary Himalayas, in a sacred spiritual land, India give to the world? It is difficult to say what will be its substantial results but the very fact that this laudable movement is being championed by a great sage Sri Swami Sivananda and that such a religious body is coming into being after so many years is itself most

highly commendable.

If we look back at the last two religious Parliaments held in the U.S.A. we can detect the working of the Divine Will and recognise a Divine Plan.

Swami Vivekananda with his message from his Master Sri Ramakrishna came to show the underlying unity of all religions and consequently taught religious tolerance.

Paramahansa Yogananda disclosed the techniques of practical Yoga.



What will be the Mahavkya of the Sage of the Himalayas, Swami Sivananda? Again and again this thought arises in my mind. Maybe it will be the message of Purna Yoga! Maybe Sivananda will disclose some more secrets of how to lead the Divine Life in our daily life. Maybe he will teach the world how to get perfect control over one's mind, how to govern the senses, how to cultivate virtues and, maybe,

many other things which do not occur to our minds just now will be taught at this Parliament.

I humbly and sincerely pray that all delegates to the Parliament of Religions may contribute their every effort to crown this exceptionally commendable movement with glorious success.

## *Some Ruminations of the Parliament*

RAI SAHEB SRI A. V. RAMAN  
(New Delhi)

The impressions gathered of the Parliament of Religions, held at Rishikesh in April 1933, are something that cannot be easily effaced. We are aware of a Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in the nineties of the last century, out of which emerged Swami Vivekananda who proclaimed in unequivocal terms the fundamental oneness of humanity. Such ideas of Parliament of Religions, in the words of the President of the Assembly, have been very common to us from days of yore.

Sangochchadham Samvadadham Sam Vijnanam Janatham 'We had often met', discussed and exchanged thoughts of religion and profited by them.'

In the context of the modern scientific civilization the entire world is, on and every part, inextricably interdependent on the other. It is therefore, all the more necessary that each little group of peoples or nations should think aright and act aright in the common interest of the entire humanity. Any vicious thinking and vicious acting on the part of a section is bound to have deleterious repercussions on the entire structure of the world. In fact, evidences today reveal that it has been so. An imbalance in a sector of humanity is having wide effects causing unhappiness, misery

and unbridled disharmony throughout the globe.

Thoughtful men all over the world have been agitated over the insecurity and the consequent unhappiness of the people everywhere. They have been seriously and sincerely at work trying to find solutions for the removal of this insecurity and ushering in an era of abiding peace and tranquillity. They had analysed meticulously all the remedies so far found by statesmen, politicians, the scientists, the humanists and the religious leaders. None of the schemes or aims so far known have been effective in bringing about the expected peace. What everybody has been attempting is to look at a sector of the truth and take it for the whole truth. It is like the men in the fable who examined an elephant in a dark room and identified each of its parts like the trunk, the head, the tail, the leg, with the entire elephant, but no sooner than a candle was brought, each came to his senses and realized that he was looking at the elephant only from a particular angle and not as an integral whole. Each, therefore mistook the part for the whole. In the light of the candle, all discovered the truth that each was seeing only one elephant and nothing else though each did it in a certain perspective.

between man and nature. Such a war will only disturb his own tranquillity and cause ripples and waves in the otherwise placid waters of life. Such a propaganda can be carried in every corner of the world by little groups with a sincerity of purpose and a determination to be effective. What is only required is an exemplary living up to these principles and that the propaganda should be by men who have lived or tried to live such a life of fulfilment. The words and thoughts of such men, spread with authority and tremendous force, will transform the millions to a hotter life.

Here was such a congregation held at Ananda Kuti on the 3rd, 4th and 5th April, 1953, which richly deserves to be called a Parliament of Religions. The chief convener, Swami Sivananda, has lived the life of fulfilment and can speak with authority to those hungry for the Message. His one motto in life has been *to be good and to do good*. The participants in the Conference were likewise aspiring souls who have lived or tried to live a life of

fulfilment and could speak forth words of conviction. The venue of the Conference was equally significant at the foot of the mighty Himalayas and on the banks of Mother Bhagirathi. Rumours say that some had a feeling that this was no authoritative gathering and had not the sanction of the nations behind it—perhaps they thought of the U.N.O. To them, therefore, it looked like mere of undue propaganda which can scarcely attract attention of serious men in the world. Of such critics we should only say 'They know not what they say'. Good thoughts from exemplars in life with a good motive are sure to penetrate the farthest corners of the world and create the necessary response. Even science has yet to discover how thought reacts on nature and humanity, but it has not so far objected to our traditional faith in the power of prayer which, if sincerely wrought, 'can move even mountains'. Anyway, we need not worry about these critics, and as the Bhagavadgita says, a good act is never done in vain.

### Concept of God

Is God an imagination, perception, inference and mental predisposition? The answer has to be, No, and at the same time, Yes. If you say Yes, then the problem arises as to how there could be any conception without a mental predisposition, and if you say No, then we have to accept God to be qualitative of Perception, which is by itself a contradiction of the causelessness and attributelessness of an ultimate Godhead. For, quality at once predisposes good and evil, and if God, being the causa of this universe, is made responsible only for the existence of good, then who is to answer for the legion of evil with which we are so familiar? Necessarily, therefore, God has to be beyond good and evil, beyond any quality whatsoever. Hence the answer is, No.

The answer is again, Yes, because a void is certainly beyond the reach of the mind, and though God, in truth, is above the mental world, a deplorable association of the finest of ideals that human mind can conceive, has to be taken recourse to, in order that man may persistently endeavour to rise above the brute in him, desist from evil and aspire to be an embodiment of the noblest of virtues. The purpose of the idealization of the Godhead is essentially to raise man from instinctiveness to rationalism, and from rationalism to intuition finally enabling him to transcend the mind itself and realize the attributeless Reality-Absolute.

Chapter Three  
**UNIVERSALITY OF RELIGION**

# Religion, the Source of All Good

SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA

Religion produces a living influence on the heart and life of a person. It affords spiritual food for the mind. It transforms man into divinity. It is life divine. It melts, purifies and changes the heart.

The foundation of religion is faith. Its superstructure is self realization. Its walls are holiness, truthfulness, purity, and non-injury. Discrimination, dispassion, serenity, self-restraint, one-pointedness of mind, and aspiration are the bricks. Love is the cement.

Social customs and conventions have been wrongly given the status of religion by ignorant people. These social customs and conventions are changing from time to time, according to the needs of the society or the exigencies of the occasion for the preservation of the society and the spiritual well-being of the individuals, according to the evolution of the age.

You cannot call social customs and conventions as religion. Religion is eternal and unchanging. If you strictly follow it, it will lead you to eternal life and freedom from the trammels of birth and death.

Believe in what the sacred scriptures tell you. Do what the holy scriptures bid you. You will soon attain the goal of religion.

All religions point out the path to God-realization or perfection or freedom. All religions are essentially the same. Real religion is love. It is the religion of oneness or unity of the soul. It is the religion of love. All religions are the different versions of the religion of love and unity.

One forgets all about religion on account of ignorance or lust for power and greed. He becomes irreligious. So he comes down to the level of a brute. He loses all sense of morality. He does havoc. He creates mischief. He steals, loots and burns houses. He lives a life of vice and dies like a worm.

If man always remembers the essential unity of all souls, if he is religious, if he has really understood that all beings are one, that all are children of one God, if he has knowledge of the law of Karma, the teachings of sants, prophets and seers, if he has understood the illusory nature of this world—he will never think of doing any harm to others in thought, word or deed. He will never manufacture bombs. He will never think of aggrandizement. He will be ever leading the life divine and be happy for ever. He will be ever serving others. He will contribute all his powers towards the happiness of others.

Irreligious life is the cause of war and riots. Irreligious life is the cause for realignments, power politics, party politics, division, separation, murder, arson and all sorts of disgraceful, abominable, heaven closing practices.

A truly religious man is a veritable blessing on this earth. He is a cementing spiritual force. He is all love. His heart is filled with mercy, kindness and affection. He is a true peacemaker. He is a savior.

On the scriptures will not make one religious. Taking oneonta day the beating of the knee, staring on the head of the bone or in case leg till a hurt, passing g

Vajroli or Nauli or doing Tratak on the sun, will not make one religious. Religious life is a life of rigorous discipline. It is the annihilation of the lower self and the development of a rich life of fullness in the Eternal.

If you take away religion, man would live for no purpose. There is no living without religion. It is only religion that makes existence valuable and fills the mind with love, devotion, serenity and cheerfulness. True religion shows its influence on every part of your conduct and makes your life sublime and divine. Religion is the tie that links man with his Creator.

Religion is the foundation of society, the source of all goodness and happiness, the basis of virtue and prosperity of the individual and through the individual of the nation. Civilization, law, order, morality and all that elevates man and gives peace to the nation are the fruits of the practice of religion.

Religion teaches men their close relationship with God and produces in them the awakening of divine consciousness. It generates in them vigorous, sublime thoughts. Religion is mixed up with your very being and daily life. It

gives you security, perennial joy and a new hope when all mundane hopes disappear.

Religious life is the greatest of all blessings. It lifts man from the mire of worldliness, impurity and infidelity. Intellect is vain if it is not illuminated by religion. Religion does what philosophy can never do. If you live in accordance with the rules of religion, you will attain wisdom, immortality, ever lasting peace and eternal bliss. You will become the wisest and the happiest among all living beings.

Religion is the supreme home of undying peace. It is the goal to which all things tend. It is the impregnable citadel of virtue, purity and ever lasting bliss. It is an imperishable fortress which cannot be destroyed by any number of atomic bombs.

Religion is not a dogma. It is not merely a belief, or emotion. It is not merely a little prayer which one does when he suffers from severe intestinal colic or chronic dysentery. It is predominantly life in the ever lasting Silence. It explains to the ignorant the nature of the Unseen and shows the way to realize God.

May you all lead a true religious life and thus attain the final beatitude or the immortal bliss!

#### Presidential Address to the Second Session

## Universality

YDGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI  
[Vadavur]

A glorious page opens today in the annals of India. Salutations to the Almighty Grace that has called for this Parliament of Religions. Hosannas to the holy souls and seekers that attend this spiritual assembly! Today India gives the world a new message of purity, unity and divinity through this Divine Parliament. For the goal of India is not political freedom alone, the very object of this freedom is to liberate the voice of India for the full expression of her soul. India's individuality has

been established by the soul force and sacrifice of Mahatma Gandhi; now India's universality is to be established by her indomitable spiritual strength.

Half a century ago Swami Vivekananda the disciple of Rama Krishna Paramahansa won laurels for India's spiritual glory in the Parliament of Religions held in the Chicago World Fair. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Rama Tirtha Dayananda Sri Anurobindo Ramana Maharishi and a number of saints and sages have

all dedicated their lives in rekindling the spiritual fire in the heart of the nation. Their aspiration is fulfilled today by the indomitable founder of the Divine Life Society, Swami Sivananda, the living Sankara. He has set up a Yogic Dynamo here whose centripetal force attracts humanity. This Parliament is a consummate victory of his spiritual adept and mission. Adorations to Siva the guiding light of millions and the master mind that has organized this magnificent assembly.

This Parliament holds its sessions in a sacred setting, resonant with the symphony of Ganga, and enlivened with the splendour of Nature's beauty and the sympathy of loving hearts. The atmosphere of quiet seclusion is the ideal place for rekindling the dormant embers of Divinity hidden in every heart.

#### HOMAGE TO THE GREAT

We pay homage today to all saints and prophets and pilgrims of love and light that have sanctified this earth. Homage to the Vedic Rishis, Vyasa, Valmiki, Buddha, Mahavira, Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Chaitanya, Vallabha and Nimbarka. Homage to Manica Vachaka, Vagisa, Tayumanavar, Ramalinga, Kahir, Tulsidas, Lokaram Mira, Andal Tagore and other inspired voices of India! Adorations to the Saviors of humanity who have sacrificed their lives at the altar of Truth—Tathagata, Lantze, Confucius, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, and salutations to Mahatma Gandhi. Homage to the Dharmachakra flag under whose protection we live with the mantra 'Truth alone wins Satyameva Jayate'. Homage to the Vedas, Upanishads, Gita, Brahma Sutras, Yoga Sutras, Bhile, Al-Koran,

Zendavesta, Tirukkural, Aruppa and other illuminating works which are the guiding light for the entire mankind.

#### MORAL UNITY

The main purpose of our gathering today is to find out the connecting link between world's recognized religions and bring together the aspiring hearts in communion with the Divine.

Religion is a binding force even like Yoga. They lead the soul from the meshes of divided mentality and yoke it to the unique divine spirit in man. Prophets are emanations of the Time Spirit, they come for the emancipation

of souls from the evil effects of wrong living. They show the way to right living. They try to unite divided man. From Moses to Mabatma, from Shankara to Sivananda, the prophets have insisted upon a standard of moral purity which is common to all 'Sban avls, charish virtus, be pure in thought, word and deed, have self control, be true to yourself, obey conscience, steal not, injure not, kill not, abuse not, be honest, plain, simple, adore parents, elders, leave off vanity, pride, greed, gluttony,



hypocrisy, laziness and indolence, practise goodness kindness and compassion.' All these are common tenets of religions and scriptures. No prophet wants you to lie, kill, steal, fornicate, hate, divide or live a sinful life. Whether you follow Buddha, Mahavira, Jesus, Rasul, Vedic Rishis or Agama Siddhas—these moral disciplines are to be observed. So here is a moral unity of all religions and faiths. Take for instance the golden rule laid down by the Analect of Konfuzi 'What you do not want yourself, do not do to others'. The same is laid down by Buddha and Jesus, the same is

repeated by the Indian sants, 'Hear ye the quintessence of Dharma and practise it. Do not do unto others what is to you itself disagreeable and distasteful. Great souls descend upon earth with mercy and compassion like the virgin morn themselves free from sins and bonds, they liberate humanity uncontaminately from sins and shackles. They purify humanity by their virtuous conduct o non violence self control, compassion, patience, forbearance, magnanimity, liberality, prayer and meditation. They are one in thought word and deed. They melt with pity for the suffering humanity.'

#### MORAL TEACHING MUST BE FOLLOWED

These great saints bear ignominy contumely and crucifixion, they give their very lives to save lives of others. The blood of the saviour has not saved humanity. Their moral teachings are in books, some read them but do not follow them. Had people followed even the first teaching 'thou shalt not kill' the world would not be writhing in fraternal blood. Man eats food soaked in merciless blood and dares to kill brother man with the sword of jealousy. Eldorado is far, far away from human ambition. The cross of Golgotha the symbol of sacrifice must be found within. Bible is in the pocket. It must thrive in the heart. The Sermon on the Mount had re echoed in the life of one Mahatma Gandhi and he too, was cruelly shot dead. The day dawns, the sun rises, yet the human heart is dark. Millions of stars march above harmoniously, but man has not learnt to walk upon the earth in peaceful harmony. His passion leads him from ambition to ambition, from war to war, from blood shed to blood shed. Only the technique of war differs, only new weapons are forged for mutual destruction. The vital man is in the same primitive state, man, the brute, has yet to evolve into man, the merciful.

Politics has thoroughly failed to restore peace, from monarchy to anarchy, from

democracy to communism—all experiments have failed to restore lasting Peace. Two world wars have already devastated great areas of the earth and collapsed the balance of life. We see famine pestilence, misery, despondency and disappointment everywhere. We see everywhere economic crisis and desperate struggle for existence. Yet the world is in fear of a third global war, and deadlier weapons threaten total destruction of humanity. No country is safe, no nation is happy, but there is yet hope for humanity. The psychology of man must change, his vital egotism, mental arrogance and scientific excesses must submit to a deep psycho love. Science has won, science is needed, we cannot go back to the antediluvian cave life. We must maintain our victory over nature and discover new wonders. But science must be used to solve creature problems easily leaving ample time for the spiritual development. The scientific brain must breathe with the heart of Buddha. Then the riddle of existence can be easily solved.

Man must rise above the stomach above vital passions far above the twilight mentality which is the root of so many castes, creeds and sectarian camps in the world. It is the narrowness of mind that has divided man from man and has made nations mutual enemies. Mind must be trained by the heart of compassion. The thinking brain must co-operate with the feeling heart. The spirit of Buddha transformed a war like Ashoka into a champion of religion and peace. The heart of Gandhiji gave a religious turn to politics. Man has an angel in him, the angel must be redeemed from the vital demon. Man is the paragon of creatures. Man is divine in essence. He can lead the divine life. He can live in communion with the inner divine and enjoy peace and bliss with all the purity of his soul. But man does not know what he is who he is where he is what for whence and wherefore he is. Divine possibilities are latent in him. He is sleeping unawares in illusion. The illusion must go and man must

know himself first, then the world and then God who is omnipotent and omnipresent. This knowledge shall give him a psychic transformation.

### THE PURE SPIRIT

Self finding is the first step to this psychic transformation. 'The knower of the Self crosses misery' says the Upanishad. Man suffers by separative ego consciousness. He can be happy by the unitive soul consciousness. That soul is in the deep caves of his heart. The brave individual who is aware of that Atman enjoys eternal bliss and none else. Life is like a bouquet of flowers which breathes fresh in soul consciousness. Just as one current manifests itself as light, heat, wind, cold and power in hundreds of machines, the soul manifests itself as Life in all its glory. The soul thinks in the brain, feels in the heart, sees in the eyes, hears in the ears, tastes in the tongue and moves in the muscles. That soul is the Sat, the truth, the knowledge, the limitless bliss in all.

The soul is beyond caste, creed, religion, name, form, denomination, dimensions, attributes and countries. It is beyond time seoses. It is beyond the mind, colour, religions, birth and death. It is itself—the Thing-in-itself. It is not in the many, the immortal in the mortal. If humanity is to live as one unique entity without the mental difference of caste, creed, religion, country and pedigree, it must cultivate soul consciousness through spiritual communion. A pot inside ocean is full in and out. Life immersed in the soul consciousness is a life of fullness. A wholesome ordering of the human life is possible only when our being is in touch with the divine principle in us. He who sees the self in all shall not be deluded by the world nor come to grief, for he sees the one in all. Knowing that mighty Atman, great spiritual heroes shed off grief. He also sees who sees all as the equal soul. These are expressions of seer experience.

### MATTER, SPIRIT AND GOD

There are three principles in us—matter, spirit and God. A gnostic force binds these three entities. It is the gnostic equilibrium which leads the meditative soul to the realization of the Divine in man. This force is felt vibrating throughout the body when the principles that constitute our being are in the purest state. The physical body, the vital nerves and the mental plane constitute the material part of our being. Above this is the spiritual plane of Sat chit ananda. The Pure Spirit manifests here. The Vijnana or gnosis links the lower self with the bigger Self through the gnostic force. When the mind is pure, calm and crystal, when the senses are well controlled, when the vital plane is free from egoism, desire, lust, envy and other evils, when it is full of luminous peace and free from agitation, when the body is free from lethargy and inertia,—then the gnostic equilibrium is felt like the flow of an electric current. This current is otherwise called Consciousness. This enables introspection and meditation. What is called Kundalini is implied in this current of energy, this cosmic energy. Patanjali insists upon complete annihilation of the mental modifications in order to attain the necessary concentration and introspection, otherwise called the process of self finding.

### THE YOGIC WAY

The traditional Yogas from the body-building Hatha Yoga to the Olympian aloofness of self immersed trance, prescribe a number of Sadhanas. Moral purity (Yama) is the first practice. It consists of the five fold discipline of celibacy, non injury non stealing, non receiving and truthfulness. Cleanliness, austerity, holy study, contentment and divine worship are the five fold discipline called Niyama. All the religions of the world are contained in Yama and Niyama. The third is the physical discipline—keeping the body and the nerves strong and fit for Sadhana. For this, Hatha Yoga

prescribes meticulous processes of intricate poses, breath control, internal cleaning, fixed gazing etc. Through these, Hatha Yoga purifies the glands, nerves, muscles, hormones and ensures a virile body. Raja Yoga prescribes an easy, firm, steady pose. Next comes the purification of the vital body by Pranayama or breath control in the ratio of 1 4 2, i.e., inhalation one unit retention of breath four units and exhalation two units. The four above processes, Yama, Niyama, Asana and Pranayama, are external processes. Pratyahara or gathering of the mind, Dharana or fixing the mind by concentration on an object or subject, Dhyaana or meditation and Samadhi or trance are the four internal Sadhanas by which spiritual consciousness dominates over all other grades of consciousness.

#### THE EASY WAY

There is an easy way to control the mind. It is to fill the being with spiritual consciousness and divine fervour. This is described in the Gita and the Upanishads and borne by individual experiences. It is to create a void in the heart and the mind by pushing off all mental wanderings and thought currents. Vacuum is a great force in science. From cyclotron to X-ray, from television to ordinary ampule, everything works around a vacuum. Remain for half an hour calm and self gathered allowing no thought current to disturb the gnostic equilibrium. This practice will create a void from which the gnostic forces can surge up and circulate over the body. To attain this there are a few practices. The inspiration and respiration can be watched and as you watch them single minded they regulate and rhythmicize themselves and the mind settles in the nest of the heart peacefully.

Another powerful way of creating the inner vacuum energy is to develop psychic devotion to God. Psychic love annihilates egotism, lust, greed and envy and promotes concentration. The mind is elevated and sublimated by psychic love. This is the

meaning of the adoration of the Guru as Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. The lower must surrender to the higher principle. This surrender removes egoism and creates the necessary field for meditation. Pure selfless service of the humanity also energizes and enlarges the individual personality and elevates his ego-free mind. Work is worship. Skill in work is Yoga. Life is act, act is thought, thought is man, and man is soul.

Meditation is another means for attaining the goal. If steady meditation is possible, no other Sadhana is necessary. The current of meditation will lead the psychic soul to the divine sanctum. For concentration, you begin with the Japa Sadhana Puja, service of the master, study of the scriptures and contemplation over their sublime truths. Concentration develops into meditation. Pure, simple Satvic food, holy company, holy study, holy contemplation, holy thoughts and deeds—all promote meditation, which is the central Sadhana. All Sadhanas mingle harmoniously in meditation. Yoga is the process of yoking the mind to the Self. There is only one pure Yoga. Denominations are simply modus operandi. Everything depends upon modus vivendi. By meditation or self analysis or holy service one finds the Atma.

The simple teaching for the common man is: Keep your body clean. Eat pure food, moderately. Sleep alone with pure thoughts. Develop the selfless spirit of service. Remember God at all times. Regularly meditate in the morning and evening for at least half an hour. Consecrate to God every act of life and do work as worship. Follow a pure saint and be guided by him. Avoid erotic films and gossip and bad company. Do not wound others' feelings. Elevate your mind. God is nigh when the mind is high. God is seen when the heart is clean. Do not attach too much importance to worldly things. Rely upon God's will, mercy and benediction.

### THE WORLD IS A TEMPLE

What is God? What is world? What is humanity? What is Yoga after all? The whole world is a temple, the collective Soul is God service is worship, and inner communion is Yoga.

Alayam lokamakhilam  
Murtih sarvatma earkulam  
Nisiklama seva sat puja  
Muktih sarvatma mangalam

'Regard all beings as your own self multiplied, be compassionate, and serve them without selfish motive. This is Yoga and this purifies and divinizes life.'

By this Sadhana one can become pure in and out and a community can live in harmony. Then the individual shall live in the universality of soul consciousness. The Dandha Narayana can be seen as the Viava Narayana—the Atma Narayana as the Paramatma Narayana.

### INTER-DEPENDENCE OF EVERYTHING

Humanity is interdependent. The life and culture of humanity is a synthesis of several religions, the thoughts of several sages and the service of innumerable hands. Stars are many, but the sky is one. Rays are many but the sun is one. Flowers and fruits are many but the garden is one. Waves are many but ocean is one. Lives are many but the Divine Spirit is one. Religions are many but the spiritual ideal is one. Prophets are many but the aim of their message is one. This universality of consciousness is the only remedy for the untold miseries created by our divided mentality, mutually hostile to one another.

Let us live in love let us get enlightenment together let us not hate each other, let us live in the harmony of the inner Spirit, full of energy, divine effulgence and peace. May peace alone reign upon earth everywhere.

## Common Message of Religion

HIS HOLINESS SRI SWAMI RAMDAS  
[Kunbhagad]

Ramdas is a believer in the unity and harmony of faiths. Before the consciousness of religious unity can be established, mankind has to rise above the narrow sectarian bias of the existing religions in the world. Each religion is indeed great in its own way founded as it is by a divine personality.

fundamentally the teachings of all the great prophets of the world are the same. A Parliament of Religions provides the best platform to bring out and stress this basic unity by presenting the teachings of all the prophets and saints of the world in their pristine purity and glory. Every effort made to accentuate the differences that exist in the

surface between the denominational religions has to be discouraged and eliminated before the consciousness of world unity can be established.



Ramdas notes that one of the objects with which the Parliament of Religions is held is to inculcate in the modern mind a truly universal outlook and promote the ideals of holy love, brotherhood and international fellow feeling in order to bring about world solidarity and peace. The disappearance of the war mentality, which threatens human life and civilization today, is solely dependent on the dawn of the consciousness of Divinity in man.

It is only the knowledge of the Divine that will elevate man from the animal to the spiritual status. On the plane of the Spirit, there over rules peace and harmony. To infuse into our life the light of the Spirit and to adjust our conduct to our fellow men accordingly, is what constitutes the real establishment of peace-consciousness in the world.

Wars break out only because of the ignorance, pride and selfishness of the people who prefer to remain in their own narrow cages unwilling to take a leap into the immortalizing sea of Divine Life. Love limited to one's country, loyalty confined to one's race, religion or community, attachment to one's family and identification with one's body are all alike the offsprings of ignorance which confines us in a cage of a smaller or a bigger dimension. To fling one's life into the infinite expanse of the Divine is the work of heroes. Happily, today Mother Earth may be proud of her many heroic sons and daughters of the East and the West, who boldly proclaim that the world is their home and all beings in it are their brethren.

Immortality is the birthright of all. Divine consciousness is the most precious heritage of mankind. Life at its source is universal, free from all limitations. The teachings of the ancient Rishis clearly show that ignorance of the one, all pervading Truth, whose nature is pure bliss, is the root cause of fear, strife and misery. International conflicts, religious wrangles, social injustice, economic exploitation and political tyranny are all found, in the ultimate analysis to spring from selfishness born of the failure to realize the unity and universality of the Spirit. When the

All life is interdependent. Hence cultivation of good manners and judicious adjustment of mutual relationship are necessary. Certain amount of crucifixion of self centered ambitions, personal conveniences and covetous desires is imperative in harmonious social relationship. Discipline of over flowing emotions, sober evaluation of temporal and spiritual propensities and a continuous effort on a realistic understanding of the human heart will go a long way in making one's life happier.

— Sriyananda.

darkness of ignorance is dispelled by the light of knowledge, one cannot but exclaim in a state of exalted consciousness:

The great Spirit that lives and moves in me is also animating and activating all beings and creatures of the universe. For me racial, national and sectarian distinctions have no significance. I belong to the world. I feel for all. I love all and I cheerfully sacrifice my time, energy and thought for the service of all. National boundaries do not exist in my universal life and consciousness. I am not a member of any particular church, creed, cult or religion. My God is as much the light, power and joy of my soul as He is of every one in the world—he be a Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, Christian, Jew or Gentile. Love is the light and glory of my soul which is one with the Son of the Universe.

All world teachers unanimously declare: 'O man, if you want peace for yourself and for others in the world, adjust your conduct in accordance with the law of love dictated by the Cosmic Spirit. Expand your vision so that it can embrace all fellow beings and link them to yourself by love, sympathy and goodwill. Rise above all narrow creeds, sectarian cults, communal leanings and national ambitions. Merge your life into the infinity of God's own experience.'

May the Almighty Spirit, the supreme Ruler of the universe awaken in the heart of mankind the consciousness of world unity and brotherhood, based on an attitude of equality towards the different religions accepting all the prophets, saints and sages alike as His representatives on earth.

# Idealism of Religion

DR HARIDAS CHAUDHURI M A PHD

[Professor American Academy of Asian Studies, San Francisco]

The summoning of the Parliament of Religions by Swami Sivananda at Rishikesh is, I think, a highly significant event in the history of world wide cultural harmony. It is to the fitness of things that India, which is the home of universal religion and eternal truth (*saman dharma*), should call the religious and cultural leaders of the world to a friendly conference for free and frank discussion, in the interests of mutual understanding between East and West. It is high time that India, which has a very important spiritual mission to fulfil in the world, should all out in her effort to mobilize the religious and spiritual forces of the world in the interests of the divine purpose immanently operative in human civilization.

The most remarkable thing about Indian Culture is its spirit of nonversality and its emphasis upon the impersonal element in the nature of things. In course of her infinitely diverse experiments with the Truth, India has been confirmed in her conviction that the different historical religions of the world are only different ways of approach to the one unifying principle of existence which goes by different names.

## DIFFERENCE IN APPROACH

Some modern thinkers have tried to draw a sharp line of demarcation between oriental religions and occidental religions by maintaining that these are concerned with radically different, albeit complementary, factors of reality. For instance, Prof F S C Northrop of Yale University in his book entitled *The Meeting of East and West* has endeavoured to prove that oriental religions are concerned with what he calls 'the aesthetic factor' in the nature of things whereas occidental religions are concerned with 'the theoretical factor' in the nature of things. The Brahman of the Vedanta, the Nirvana of Buddhism, the Tao of Taoism,

the Tai Chi of Neo Confucianism, are, in his opinion, different ways of expressing 'the undifferentiated aesthetic continuum,' i.e., the continuous flux of unmodified sense-impressions. On the other hand, the Allah of Islam and the God of Christianity, are, in his opinion, the rationally postulated background of the world of logic and science.

The element of truth in the distinction drawn above seems to be that oriental religions have laid greater emphasis upon the differentiated unity of all existence, whereas occidental religions have been more concerned to give a determinate character to the unifying principle of life. But it is a great mistake to suppose that the supreme Truth of oriental religions is just the aesthetic unity of immediate sense-experience. The Brahman of Vedanta or the Nirvana of Buddhism is an immensely richer concept than that. The one indivisible truth of oriental religions is that God can neither be reached by logical rationalism nor by the immediacy of sense experience. He is revealed only to supersensuous and supra rational-identity consciousness (*budhi*, or *prajna*, or *adatajnana*). Though realized through spiritual intuition alone God is definitely experienced as permeating both our sense experience and rational thought. It is also a great mistake to suppose that the God of occidental religions is essentially the outcome of rational speculation or a concept by postulation. For, the great founders of occidental religions were also all men of immediate spiritual realization, so that, as Sri Ramakrishna clearly demonstrated, even occidental religions, when sincerely pursued, lead to direct and immediate experience of the same spiritual truth.

Prof Northrop's distinction between the 'undifferentiated aesthetic continuum' of oriental religions and the determinate Divine

# Fellowship of Faiths

SRI GAURI PRASAD

[Retired Judge, Swargashram, Rishikesh]

A close and synthetic study of the great religions of the world reveals their homogeneity—certain basic principles underlying them all, and certain basic truths in regard to which they all agree.

It will be our attempt in this brief survey to understand that great Truth—a Truth, as Sri Aurobindo has aptly put, from which all other truths derive, and by the light of which all other truths find their right place, explanation and relation to the entire scheme of knowledge. But precisely for that reason it is not likely to be found in its entirety or in all its bearings in any single philosophy or scripture nor can it be uttered altogether and for ever by any one teacher, thinker, or prophet. Secondly, this Truth, though one and eternal, expresses itself in Time, as also through the mind of men. Consequently the statement of Truth, the precise expression used, must largely be subject to the mutations of Time and cease to have the same force.

But what we can do with profit is to seek in it the actual relative truths it contains, to extract from it what can help us or the world at large, and to give it a natural and vital form of expression that will be appealing to the mentality of and be helpful to the spiritual needs of our present day humanity.

In fact it is only those scriptures, religions and philosophies, which can thus be constantly renewed and relived, and whose element of permanent truth can be constantly reshaped and developed in the inner thought and spiritual experience of an evolving humanity, that continue to be of living importance to mankind. We have also to remember that what is of entirely permanent value in any religion or philosophy is that which, besides being universal, has been experienced, lived and seen with

a higher intuitive perception than the intellectual vision.

## CONCEPT OF RELIGION

Religion is not the acceptance of any abstract philosophical thought or the celebration of ceremonies, but a *kind of life*. The Hindu philosophy of religion starts from and returns to an experimental basis. Only the basis is as wide as human nature itself. Religious experience is not a wholly untinged presentation of the real, uninfluenced by the ideas and tendencies of the perceiving mind.

The Hindu seeks the *unity in religion, not in common creed, but in a common quest for Truth*, i.e., God. He understands that if the whole race of man, in every stage of culture, is the offspring of God, then it must be admitted that in the vast compass of His providence all are being trained by His wisdom and supported by His love to attain within the limits of their powers a knowledge of the Supreme. In this sense Hinduism is not a religious sect, but a fellowship of all who accept the law of love through which one earnestly seeks the Truth. That God wills a rich harmony and not a uniform conformity is the abiding faith. The Hindu seeks to realize the fundamental unity among all religions on the basis of the oneness of God.

## GOD IS LOVE

A living faith in the oneness of God means acceptance of the brotherhood of mankind. This basic principle is recognized in all religions. *Bani adam naaz ul degrund*, declares a Mohammedan, meaning all mankind are like limbs of the same body. Similarly a Christian says 'We are all children of one Father'. The Hindu seer has gone much further and boldly declared *Tat Twam Asi*—That thou art. You are in essence the immortal Spirit. It may then

be asked if all religions' have unanimously declared this besio universal truth, why there is so much of hostility, animosity, hatred and strife among various peoples, nations and races inhabiting the world ? It is because we do not sufficiently bear in mind and in our coindnot the other basic twin-principle of truth and love. Just as God is truth, so also God is love.

Though it is recognized that out of the Supreme Being emerges this phenomenal universe, in which all is in each and each in all, yet this play of all in each and each in all is concealed from us, at first by the mental play of our egoistic self. We conceive we are infinitely important to the all, but to us the all is negligible, and we alone are important to ourselves.

This is the sign of the original ignorance, the Vedantic play of Maya; this is the sign of the presence of a cosmic principle of futility in us, otherwise called the ego consciousness. This egoistic self-sufficiency in us prevents us from drawing the right and full value from life.

To become one with all beings and to know and deal with them as part of our other-selves, we have to take recourse to the noble virtue of unselfish love, the source of unmixed joy. 'Verily from the everlasting joy do all objects have their birth,' declare our seers. Only he has attained the final Truth who has known that the whole world is a creation of joy.

#### JOY IS LOVE

'From joy are born all creatures, by joy they are sustained, towards joy they progress and into joy they enter.' This joy, whose other name is love, must by its very nature have duality for its realization. When the singer has his inspiration he makes himself into two; he has within him his other-self as the hearer and enjoyer, and the outside audience is only a projection—an extension of this other-self of his. It is the joy or love that creates this separation. The singer translates his joy into singing,

and the hearer translates back the song into the original joy; then the communion between the singer and the hearer is complete. God's manifestation in creation takes effect through the fullness of joy. It is the nature of this abounding joy to realize itself in form, which is law. It indeed seems so wonderful that nature has these two aspects at one and the same time and an apparently contradictory,—one of bondage and the other of freedom.

#### LAW AND LIBERTY.

Take an example: the flower of a plant. However fine and beautiful it may look, it is pressed to do a great service, and its colour and form are all suited to its work. It has to bring forth the fruit and when the time of its fruition arrives, it has to shed its exquisite petals and give up its sweet perfume. It has no time to flaunt its finery. Viewed from without, necessity seems to be the only factor in nature for which everything works and moves. But when the same flower enters the heart of man, its aspect of busy practicability is gone and he becomes the very emblem of leisure and repose. Its form is in law, but its spirit is in beauty. In its beauty it harmonizes the law and the liberty. The same object that is the embodiment of endless activity without, is also the perfect expression of beauty and peace within and a transmitter of joy to us. In love all the contradictions of existence merge themselves and are lost.

The infinite joy or love is manifested itself in manifold forms taking upon itself the bondage of law; we fulfil our destiny only when we go back from form to truth, from law to love; when we translate ourselves from finite into infinite, i. e., from individual into universal. But we have to remember that, as joy or love expresses itself in law, so the soul of man finds its freedom or joy in action. The soul of man is ever freeing itself from its own folds by its activity; had it been otherwise it could not have done any voluntary work.

### EXPRESSION OF LIFE-FORCE

The more a man can express what is latent in him, the nearer he is to the goal of life. The Upanishad says 'In the midst of activity alone wilt thou desire to live a hundred years.' It is the saying of those who had fully experienced the joy of life. This joy of work in man is a true expression of the joy of the soul in man. It is not wholly true to say that man is active on compulsion. If there is compulsion on its outer side, there is pleasure and joy on its inner side.

We can look at ourselves in its two different aspect—the self which displays itself and the self which transcends itself and thereby reveals its own meaning in freedom and love. To display itself it tries to be big, to retain every thing to itself and to stand upon the heap of its own accumulation. But to reveal itself it gives up everything it has, becoming perfect like a flower which has bloomed out from the bud, pouring out all fragrance and sweetness from its beautiful form. Let us illustrate it by an instant. Look at a lamp. It contains its oil which it holds securely in its close grasp and guards from the least loss. Thus it is separate from all other objects around it and is miserly. But when it is lighted it finds its meaning at once, it throws its light all around it and freely sacrifices its fund of oil to feed the flame. Such a lamp is the individual self. So long as it hoards its possession it keeps dark and fails to fulfil its purpose. When it finds illumination, it forgets itself, holds the light high, serves with everything it has and thus reveals itself unto itself.

In the western countries we see that man is mainly concerned with extending himself outwards and gaining material power. His tendency to acquire material power leaves him little or no time to look within and work in the field of inner consciousness which is the field of fulfilment of the soul.

In our country the danger comes from the

opposite side. We would realize Brahman in meditation only, in his aspect of completeness and perfection—as an Absolute. We should not see him in his aspect of evolution and becoming. But true spirituality is calmly balanced in strength, in the co-relation of the within and the without, of the inner consciousness of the soul within and the power of the body and mind without.

### JOY OF LIFE IS IN SERVICE

The true striving in the quest of truth as God consists not in the neglect of proper action, but in the effort to attune it closer and closer to the eternal harmony. The text of this striving should be *Yadyat Larma prakurvita sad brahma samarpayet*—'Whatever work thou doest, consecrate that to Brahman, the creator.' This dedication is the song of the soul, in it is its freedom and joy. Joy reigns when all work becomes the path of this life leading on to God. The chief among the knowers of Brahman has been defined in the Upanishad as 'He whose joy is in Brahman, whose play is in Brahman is the active one'. Joy without the play of joy is no joy, play without activity is no play. How can he whose joy is in Brahman remain inactive? Brahman itself, gives expression to its joy in the same way. Its joy is ever dedicating itself in the cosmic creation. It is not content with giving us itself, but it gives us strength that we may likewise give ourselves. That is why the seer in the Upanishad prays to God 'May He grant us the beneficent mind.' The beneficent mind is that which makes us perceive the want of another self as the inherent want of our ownself. When we work under the guidance of such a beneficent mind then our activity assumes the form of a dedicated service, it is not goaded by want but urged by the satisfaction of the soul.

### THE UNIVERSAL BASIS

If we can gain the strength to love, to love fully and to live the life of love fully, we shall be able to realize the whole world is love for

love has given it birth, sustains it and takes it back to its own bosom. If we realize this truth, we can realize the law in creation. When we recognize the law in nature we realize harmony in the universe. By recognizing this law in our inner nature, we attain mastery over the lower self and become free. This freedom is impossible of attainment without submission to law; for the Creator in His aspect of becoming is bound by his law, the truth. In other words, He is free in his joy or love. It is on this universal basis of truth and love that all religions, faiths and philosophies can work in co-operation to achieve peace and harmony in

the world. This is my concept of the one common religion which has to be lived by all mankind. In living this common religion of humanity we shall not only be able to realize our fellowship of all faiths and unity of all religions but will also be fulfilling the mission of our life on this earthly plane.

May it, in all humility, be stated that the Divine Life Society is striving in all its activities to fulfil the mission of inculcating and spreading this universal spirit of service and love, far and wide, under the guidance of Sri Swami Sivananda Ji Maharaj, its Founder-President.

## Comparative Sayings from Twelve Religions

1. *Hinduism*. This is the high religion which wise men esteem: the life-giving here the of other creatures are as dear to them as the breaths of one's own self. Men gifted with intelligence and purified souls should always treat others as they themselves wish to be treated. (*Munibharata* 13:115, 21:2)

2. *The Hebrew Faith*. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (*Leviticus* 19:18)

3. *Zoroastrianism*. Him who is less than thee consider as an equal, and an equal as a superior, and a greater than him as a chieftain. (*Sacred Books of the East* 24:9)

4. *Taoism*. Regard your neighbour's gains as your own gain, and regard your neighbour's loss as your own loss. (*Tao-Shang Kuan-Ying Pie*, Chicago, *Open Court*, 1906, p. 53)

5. *Jainism*. Indifferent to worldly objects, a man should wander about treating all creatures in the world as he himself would be treated. (*Sacred Books of the East*, 45:314)

6. *Buddhism*. In five ways should a clergymen minister to his friends and familiars: by generosity, courtesy and benevolence, by treating them as he treats himself and by being

as good as his word. (*Sacred Books of the Buddhists*, Vol. 4, Part 3, p. 182)

7. *Confucianism*. 'Is there one word which may serve as a rule of practice for all one's life?' The Master said, 'Is not Reciprocity (sympathy, consideration) such a word? What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others.' (*Analects* 15:23)

8. *Christianity*. All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law of the prophets. (*Matt.* 7:11)

9. *Islam*. No one is a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself. (*The Forty-two Traditions of An-nawawi*, in 'The Moslem World,' April, 1939, p. 169)

10. *Sikhism*. As thou deemest thyself, an deem others; then shalt thou become a partner in heaven. (*M. A. Macauliffe*, 'The Sikh Religion,' 6:205)

11. *Tenrikyo Shinto*. Irrespective of their nationality, language, manners and culture, men should give mutual aid, and enjoy reciprocal, peaceful pleasure, by showing in their conduct that they are brethren. (*Tenrikyo Doctrine*, 1930, p. 18)

12. *Bahai Faith.* If thou lookest toward justice, choose thou for others what thou choosest for thyself. Blessed is he who prefers his brother before himself. (*Bahai World Faith* 1943, 180, 183)

13. *Primitivism.* The good man never harms any self, either his own or another's. (*Theodore O. Fabyi, Yoruba Tribe, Nigeria, Africa*)

[Collected by Prof. R F. Piper, Ph.D., New York]

## Unity and Harmony of Religions

SRI E.A. RAJAGOPALACHARI, B.A., B.L.

Religion, as Rama Tirtha said, 'is essentially a mysterious process by which the mind or the intellect reaches back and loses itself to its inscrutable source, the great beyond.' We all know that a Christian devotee or a Mussalman lifts up his hands when offering prayer, which indicates that it is the above, the beyond, that he is attempting to reach. In a similar manner the Hindu ascet, when entering into a trance, shuts his eyes naturally, indicating that it is within, the invisible, the beyond, in which his mind or the intellect is getting merged.

Religion when considered in its fundamental aspect is a natural instinct in man to probe into the mysteries of God and into all those of the universe. Religion is a living force, a personal tie between man and God and a real solace in life. Its true purpose is to give man a vision of the laws of life, and a true knowledge of the Creator. But unfortunately people exploit a crude idea of religion by exclusively associating it with primitive scriptures and conventional churches. The basic cause of all religious dissensions, fanaticism and racial riots is the thorough misunderstanding of religion.

There are three aspects of religion, viz., philosophical, mythological and the ritualistic. The second and the third constitute the outer covering and not the kernel of religion. Majority of the people, however, are more concerned with these outer aspects, which can easily reach the common mind. External modes and

formalities vary in different religions, and form a dividing wall between every religion. The emotional man tries to seek God through these non-essential auxiliaries, and thus the followers of different religions tend to be antagonistic. Dissemination of the true knowledge of religion with greater emphasis on the fundamental, common principles, and curtailing of dogmas and formalities are the only means to promote a better understanding and good will among the different sections of mankind.

Knowingly or unknowingly, every individual possesses an inner urge of unfolding the latent spiritual consciousness that exists in all. In some it is manifest in a very feeble way, while in some others it might glow in a far greater brilliance. The human personality has to evolve gradually from its lowest stage of instincts, through the stage of reason, to the highest stage of divine consciousness. Religion is a means to this end.



All religions are basically one. They believe in the law of cause and effect. They admit the value of sacrifice, righteousness, love and truthfulness. They emphasize on the cultivation of virtues and eradication of vices, and advocate the brotherhood of man. All religions present to man a high code of ethics for the development of his character as the most important duty in life, and all such ethical teachings bear remarkable similarity. Zoroastrianism lays stress on righteousness (Ashoi).

Hinduism emphasizes the practice of Dharma. The basic teaching of Christianity is love. Buddhism lays stress on the avoidance of evil, which, no doubt, promotes righteousness. Purity of speech and chastity form the nucleus of the Islamic faith. Truth is adored in every religion as identical with God. To a Hindu it is the eternal Brahman, supporting everything. To a Jew it is the Jehovah. To a Zoroastrian it is the Ahura mazda. To a Christian it is the Christ. All great teachers are agreed on the existence of this common aspect of God.

All religions describe God as all pervading Power, omniscient, omnipotent, merciful. Kind

and benevolent. They provide us the common link of prayer, which connects the individual to God as a means of the former's communication with the latter. The western philosophers describe God as the Over-soul, Substance, the Thing in itself, and to the Hindu philosopher He is the Sat chit-ananda. The emphasis on love and compassion is common to all religions. There are numerous such fundamental similarities in every faith. Universal education on the basis of these fundamentals is the need of the hour. When this is done, permanent peace all over the world can no longer be an utopian possibility, but a living reality.

## Fundamentals of Religion

SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA

All religions are one.  
Religion has many doors.  
Religion shows the way to God—  
The source of religion is God.  
O Men! do not fight,  
Do not enter into hot discussions,  
Practise religion,  
And attain the goal of religion.  
Brahman, Allah, Jehovah,  
Ahura Mazda, are one.  
Truth is one,  
Sages call it by different names.  
Prophets appear in different ages  
To emphasize  
The various aspects of Truth.  
Their teachings are the same.  
It is ignorance that divides,  
Be tolerant towards other religions.  
Respect all Prophets.  
Behold the one Truth in all.

I  
Religion, God, Dharma, Karma and the Universe are eternal and beginningless. They are inseparable. Religion shows the way to

salvation or the final beatitude or freedom from birth and death.

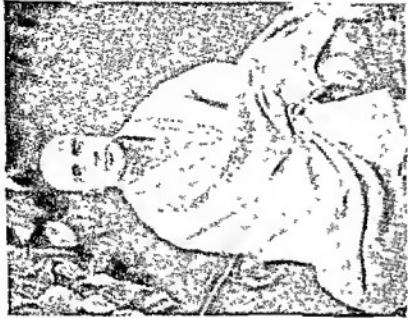
Religion contains philosophy, mythology, ethics and rites. It prescribes various kinds of Sadhana or religious practices to attain various types of Sadhaks.

Real religion is one. It is the religion of heart. It is the religion of love. It is the religion of the Vedas. It is Vedanta. It is the religion of Silence. It is Life Everlasting in the imperishable Absolute or the Eternal. Real religion is transcendental. It is above the senses, the mind and the intellect. It is Turiya or sleepless sleep where there is neither sound nor colour, neither day nor night, neither light nor darkness, neither pleasure nor pain, neither virtue nor vice.

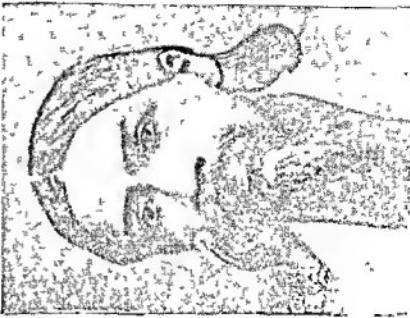
### II

The ultimate source of religion is God. God is the primary source of all knowledge. By a comparative study of the principal religions of the world, you will understand that the newer religions can be traced to older ones, the older ones to still older ones, and so on, till you reach

SONE OF THE GREAT INTERPRETERS OF THE HINDU RELIGION WHO WERE ALSO UNIVERSAL RELIGIONISTS



*Sri Yukteswar Giri*



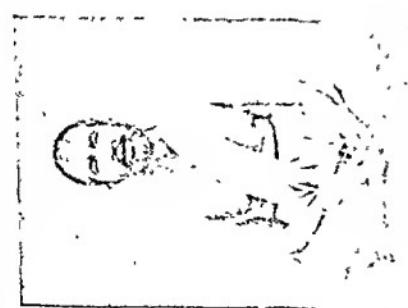
*Swami Rama Tirtha*



*Swami Vivekananda*



*Paramahansa Yogananda*



*Meher Baba*



*Mahatma Gandhi*

Brahmoism is born of Hinduism and Christianity; and so also with other minor religions.

Whenever any important truth of religion was suppressed by the arrogance and selfishness of the priestly class or forgotten through the ignorance of the people, there appeared a great saint or prophet or religious teacher. He emphasized that truth, removed the dross which had concealed or obscured it and made it shine in its original brilliance, purity, splendour and glory.

In this way every new religion was only an endeavour to reform the older religion as it then existed and a protest against its abuses.

When in olden times people forgot all about the Vedic monotheism, there arose Zoroaster. He preached the worship of one God, Ahura Mazda and overthrew the worship of Devas.

When the religion of the Vedas degenerated into a blind observance of rites and sacrifice of animals, when the Sudras were treated with contempt by the Brahmins, there appeared the compassionate Buddha, who stopped killing of animals and raised the status of Sudras.

When the priests of Judaism became arrogant, there arose Jesus to purify Judaism. When Christianity had also degenerated into idolatry and superstition, there appeared Mohammed to preach his monotheism.

When Hinduism degenerated on account of creeping in of superstitions and false worship, various reformers appeared to purge Hinduism of superstitions and wrong beliefs and observances.

Sri Saokera appeared to remove wrong beliefs and abuses in Buddhism and Judaism and established Kevala Adwaita or absolute monism. Sri Ramakrishna appeared to teach Bhakti and make people practise devotion and realize God while remaining in the world.

If people become cruel, a teacher like Buddha appears to preach Ahimsa or non-injury. If they become timid, another teacher like Guru Govind Singh comes to infuse courage

in them. If they become inclined towards vigorous Tapas, a teacher like Ramaouji comes and preaches: "Realize while enjoying in the world."

Thus all great religious teachers were original reformers. They tried to improve the existing religions and do good in their own way to suit the time and condition of the society in which they were born.

### III

Mohammedanism is based chiefly on Judaism and partly on Zoroastrianism. Judaism is based on Zoroastrianism.

Mohammed borrowed from the Jews the doctrine regarding angels. The Jews learned the names and offices of the angels from the Persians.

The Mohammedans believe in the immortality of the Soul and that there will be a day of resurrection when the dead will rise to receive the rewards and punishment of their actions in life in accordance with their merits and demerits. This doctrine has been taken from Judaism. The belief in the day of judgment has been taken from Judaism. The Jews borrowed this idea from the Zoroastrians.

Mohammed speaks of Al-Sirat, the bridge of hell. The Jews also speak of the bridge of hell. The Jews and the Mohammedans have taken this idea from the Zoroastrians who teach that all men will have to pass over a bridge called Pul Chinavad on the last day.

After passing Al Sirat, the faithful will reach Paradise. Mohammed took this idea from Judaism. The Jews borrowed this idea from the Zoroastrians.

The Mohammedan conception of God agrees almost exactly with the Jewish notion. The doctrine that there are two powers in the world, a good and benevolent power, viz., God, and an evil and malevolent power, viz., Satan, is also taken from the Jews. This idea was borrowed by the Jews from the Zoroastrians who call these two powers as Spenta Mainyu and Angira Mainyu. The Zoroastrians borrowed this idea

from a beautiful allegory in the Vedas which describes the struggle of good and evil in this world

The doctrines of Christianity are all taken from Judaism. There is a Buddhist element in Christianity. The moral precepts and teachings of Buddhism have much in common with those of Christianity. Buddhism in Syria was a preparation of the religion preached by Lord Jesus. Buddhism prevailed in Palestine when Christ was born. There had been a channel of communication between Buddhism and Christianity.

Christianity owe to Buddhism for its high morality. The ethical precepts of Lord Jesus are based on Buddhism as preached in Palestine by the Essences, when Jesus was born.

The doctrines of Christianity are based on Judaism and its moral precept on Buddhism.

Buddhism sprang up directly from Hinduism. Buddha was a rebel child of Hinduism. He made subtle analysis of the world and prescribed different kinds of Sadhana or forty kinds of concentration, for eradicating Trishna (craving), for self culture and self restraint and attaining Nirvana. This is a special feature of Buddhism. He did not preach anything new. He advocated the practice of virtues or the noble eight fold path. Buddhism has an excellent system of morality.

Judaism is based on Zoroastrianism. The conception of God (Ahura Mazda) of Zoroaster is perfectly identical with the notion of Jehovah of Jews. The Jews have got the idea of two powers, viz., God and the Devil. The Jews believe in Angels, resurrection, Day of Judgment, weighing of the actions of man in the balance, future life, heaven and hell. There is a similarity in the Parsi and Jewish accounts of hell.

Zoroastrianism is based on Hinduism. There is a similarity between the Vedic and Zend languages. The doctrines and ceremonies of Zoroastrianism have a remarkable similarity to those of the Vedas. The doctrine of metem-

psychosis is inculcated in the Zoroastrian sacred books.

Hinduism is Vedic religion. All truths are ultimately traceable to the Vedas. The stream of religion has flowed into the world from the Vedas, as its fountain head through the channels of the Zend Avesta, the Bible and the Koran. Vedas are the ultimate source to which all religious knowledge can be traced. The founders and teachers of all other religions have drawn their inspiration from the Vedas and the Vedic Rishis and brought light and peace to all mankind.

#### IV

All religions have taken their origin in the continent of Asia. South Asia gave birth to four religions, viz., Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. In Eastern Asia, China produced Confucianism and Taoism. In Japan Shintoism took its birth. Western Asia gave birth to Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism took their origin in 6th century B.C., Judaism in 13th century B.C., Jainism in 6th century B.C., Christianity in A.D. 30, Islam in A.D. 622, Sikhism in 15th century A.D.

Whatever may be the date of origin of the various religions and the number of their followers, it will be foolish to claim superiority of one over another.

The number of followers in Hinduism is 300,000,000, in Buddhism 520,000,000, in Christianity 500,000,000, Judaism 16,000,000, Mohammedanism 300,000,000, Jainism 1,450,600, Sikhism 5,700,000, Zoroastrianism 125,000, Shintoism 17,000,000, Confucianism 400,000,000.

Dynamism is a fundamental aspect in religion. No religion can afford to be static. Evolution is the law of nature. Human thought is ever progressive. Hence, primitive beliefs, thoughts, evaluations and sentiments have to adjust themselves with the progress of time in order to make religion a living reality in the conduct and aspiration of humanity.

WHOSE CONTRIBUTIONS APPPEAR IN THIS VOLUME



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the most ancient and primitive religion of humanity.

There has never been any real invention in the realm of religion. The fundamental principles which constitute its essence are as old as the human race or this world. They were revealed by God to the Rishis or seers in the beginning of Creation or Kalpa. They are found in the Vedas, which are admitted as the oldest religious books or scriptures in the library of mankind.

Scientists may have wonderful new discoveries or inventions in the realm of matter but there will never come a time when you will be able to know any 'new' truth about God. You may have a better understanding, a more thorough realization of the nature of God, but you will never be able to discover a new attribute of God or Brahman, because the knowledge of God has not been originated by the human mind.

So is the case also with all religious knowledge. There never has been there never shall be, any real invention or discovery in the sphere of religion. There never was a religious founder, who had invented a new religion, or revealed a new truth. These founders are all transmitters only, but not original makers. There has been no entirely new religion, since the beginning of the world. Religion is ultimately of divine origin.

The Vedas are the ultimate source of all religions. They are the fountainhead from which the stream of religious knowledge has

flowed through the channels of Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity and Mohammedanism. The common truths and principles of all religions are ultimately derived from the Vedas only. All religions in essence can be traced ultimately to the Vedas.

At the present moment all religions contain a mixture of truth, which is divine, and error which is human. The fundamentals or essentials of all religions are the same. There is difference only in the non-essentials. The apparent differences in religions are due to a misconception or misconstruction of the long forgotten

truth of the Vedas on which they are ultimately founded. All systems of religion are equally divine and true. The conflicting points are all due to misconception and misconstruction of the truths on account of prejudice, bigotry, lack of purity of heart and subtlety and purity of intellect and perverted condition of the intellect of the

people, according to the grade of their evolution.

The great majority of religions had their origin in prehistoric times. Hence there are no genuine documents or trustworthy traditions concerning them.

Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity and Mohammedanism are the six great religions of the world. There is no founder for Hinduism. All the other religions have their founders. They are named after the name of the founder. Jainism is only another form of Buddhism. Sikhism is based chiefly on Hinduism and partly on Islam.



## Concurrence Among Religions

Here is a concurrence among the fundamentals of the important religions of the world

The intuitional Hindu would say 'This Truth—'Brahman is All'—is the Magna Ceter of 'Absolute' Freedom Let a man think, let a man speak Never mind if he makes errors; further knowledge will lead him right He cannot wander outside the Self, for the Self is everywhere He cannot lose the Self, for the Self is within him Let the intellect soar it will, upwards and onwards, as far as its wings can beat, still far beyond its powers, North and South and East and West, for Brahman stretches everywhere. The individual self being a manifestation of Brahman cannot therefore shake off the eternal certainty of Self existence" (Dr Annie Besant's Kewale Lectures)

And the Buddhist "I did not say that there is not, and I did not say that there is What is the use of speaking about the existence of God? The Reality is so very Infinite that it is unwise to express that it is or is not. Live the right life You will then know what really is" (The Teachings of Buddha)

And the Christian 'There is one body

and one spirit... one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, and one Father of all, who is over all and through all, and in all" (The New Testament)

And the Mohammedan "To everyone we have given a law and a way And if God had pleased, He would have made you all one people (of one religion) But He hath done otherwise, that He might try you in that which He had severally given unto you whereof report forward in good works Unto God shall ye return and He will tell you that concerning which you disagree" (The Al Koran)

And the Zoroastrian "Have the religions of mankind no common ground? Broad indeed is the carpet which God has spread, and many are the colours which He has given it Whatever road I take joins the highway that leads to the Divine" (Teachings of Zarathushtra)

And the Chinese 'This world is in a mysterious way the manifestation of that Infinite Tao (the Great) How this world came into being cannot be explained but we can understand that there is only one Being'" (Lao tze's Teachings)

## The Ideal of Unity

SRI SWAMI CHIDANANDA

[Professor of Raja Yoga, Yoga Vedanta Forest University, Rishikesh]

We are children of Bharatavarsha, and we are heirs to the lofty sublime Upanishadic lore The clarion call which we have been hearing running down the centuries from the lofty pinnacles of the Upanishadic wisdom and experience has been *Elam sat tripta bahudha radauts* and again *Ekameta adityiyam brahma*, thus authoritatively, from the force of their living experience, establishing the fact of the

unity of Godhead God is one sages declare boldly, because they know Him to be so They know Him, they feel Him, and they delve into a cosmic experience of oneness Living this experience, they declare from the pinnacles of their Upanishadic realization and wisdom *Elam Sat* the Truth, the eternal Reality, the great Existence, the Being, is one and there is no second to it

This great heritage is ours. To declare once again this great assertion of unity, to create waves of this feeling of unity, and to take this message of the unity of the ultimate Being to every nook and corner of the universe, into the hearts of all, would be the best way of being worthy of this birthright, this heritage of ours.

### UNITY THE FACT OF LIFE

Existence being one, mankind is also one, for uniformity is the law of the universe in its outer aspect. Externally variety or diversity

is the law of nature. But in its inner aspect uniformity or unity is the fact of life. Let us illustrate this in a very simple but clear manner. Take all the forms of life. Take all the elements in the external, visible physical universe. Take all the various species of created things. You will find that they are one everywhere upon earth. The sky is the same everywhere whether it is the Christian land, the Muslim land, the Buddhist land or the Chinese land or the

Japanese land. Water is the same, earth is the same, sun, shine, the wind, the trees and the forests, light and darkness, sun, stars and moon—in all the forces of nature, there is absolute unity, absolute oneness, absolute uniformity, similarity, all over this universe.

We have infinite variety in the submarine species but fish is the same in all the oceans, be it the Pacific or the Atlantic or the Indian ocean. Flies, mosquitoes, ants, birds and insects—a needle of what you will, you will find

that they are essentially one and the same everywhere. Banana in India may slightly differ from banana in South Africa or America but the species banana is the same. Of course, because externally variety is the law of nature banana may differ in different parts of India, in some places during different seasons. But, all over the world ever since creation began, through all the centuries past, and into the future also, these species of the creation have been and will be the same. They are one everywhere. Thus, you will find as you study nature, that oneness or unity is quite an inescapable fact, the inevitable law.

### MANKIND IS ONE

### LIFE IS ONE

### GOO IS ONE

The same law holds good in connection with man also. Mankind is one. The species of homo sapiens is one. The unity of mankind is a fact from which there is no escape. We have to accept it. Observation irresistibly drives us to this conclusion.

On the one side we have this unity of mankind all over the universe, at the other side, we have utterances of sages, *Ekam bra adityayam Brahma*. God is one. Thus the two terminals being established in unity, the field which is between them the soil of their interaction and inter-relation, this life and the processes of their experiencing and relationship, which we name religion, also has naturally to be one. This too has to be governed by that law. Absolute unity has to penetrate of the nature of



oneoess Thus when we go into the fact of religio from this observation and from this attitude, or point of view, we are drawn to the conclusion that whatever the apparent external differences of religions may be, yet the process of religion has necessarily to be one and the same.

#### PURPOSE OF RELIGION IS ONE

Now taking this inference, let us proceed to examine it and see if, in fact, this inference is correct Let us try to see if actually the process of religio is of the nature of unity. It is so Any process may be regarded to have three aspects Everything is done with a purpose There is a motive force behind the actual process of technique There is so ultimate objective which this process strives to achieve These three aspects is the matter of religion ultimately seem to be this What is the motive behind the existence of religion? It is a desire to escape from the various trammels of this earthly existence.

Examine all religions They may have risen from a single human personality, a prophet with divine inspiration, or the religio may be some eternal law coming down to us from a time which is beyond the reach of historical survey. We will find that, whatever be the nature of the religios now existing amongst mankind upon this earth, at the basis, the motive force is to free man from the torments that beset this severly limited physical existence, this mortal life upon earth which is full of miseries, pains, sorrows, disappointments, diseases, death, separation, grief, loss, which aim is to escape from the menace of death and to get beyond sorrow, to attain a state beyond sorrow, beyond pain, beyond all imperfections, defects, limitations, and bondage—that is the motive of all religios

The ultimate destination it promises for the believer, one who practises and lives a life of religion, is a state where the being is free from all pains, from all wants. Everything is ful-

led there There is no feeling of want There is complete cessation of sorrow There is no more pain or death The fear of death goes away. Each religion promises this end in its own way We have the Pleasne Gardens of the Islamic conception of heaven We have so eternal state of glory by the throne of God on High where man is once for all free from all trouble pain, sorrow and death, according to the conception of the Christian There is the supreme Nirvana, infinite, ineffable Peace, that is reached by the Buddhist. There is the Bliss of Satchidananda where man becomes immortal, free from all fear, full of light, full of eternal bliss as conceived of by the Upasadic religion. Every religion ultimately points to infinite peace, eternal bliss, all-light, as the final destination.

#### PROCESS OF RELIGION IS ONE

The process of religio is the freeing of man from the factors which bind him down to this earthly existence of pain and death This process is to free him from these factors If unrighteousness is the factor for suffering, then he righteous Give up Adharma If through untruth man is to be bound to this vexing mortal life, and has to pay a heavy penalty to suffering and pain, then ahaadoo falsehood, he truthful If by being cruel, you will reap a harvest of pain, torment and suffering, cast away cruelty or Himsa and embrace Ahimsa

Be good, be kind, be compassionate Thus the process of religion develops in a scientific way by studying the causative factors of this earthly life and its pains and sorrows and torments they insist that by living a life of practical religion you can remove all these causative factors Lead the life carefully so such a way that you do not commit these things which result in this painful existence Thus they wean man away from the indulgence in the play of his animal, sinful nature, the Pashu in him, the animal in him

#### GOAL OF RELIGION IS ONE

The process of religio slowly works out a scheme of life for man, and he is made to bring

into manifestation, into active expression, all these lofty life transforming elements of the divine aspect of his being to overcome the animalistic aspect and progressively unfold the divine element that is already part and parcel of his innermost consciousness Man is made in the image of God therefore, godliness is the essential factor of his real being His Swarupa is Divine. Therefore, the external operations of the Asuric nature have to be completely removed and cast away, thereby giving full scope for the perfect manifestation of the Divine Svarupa in him.

With the unfoldment and the blossoming of the divine Consciousness in man, he becomes at once a powerful link with the infinite divine existence, Satchidananda. Thus the unity which has been for the time being veiled, as it were, by ignorance—by Mala, Averane and Vikshepa,—is established. This comes from the fullness of experience and culmination of religious practice which is the discovery of the eternal unity with Godhead. These three factors of the basic purpose—the process and the goal or end in view also would be found to be absolutely the same in all religions.

No religion wants you to be tied down to this earthly life. All religions have as their goal the reaching of perfection, freedom and immortality. All religions also have the same process in its essence, whatever may be the differences in the details and they all want the complete annihilation of the lower self, the animalistic part of man, and the progressive unfoldment of his divine nature, until the unmanifest becomes manifest, the latent becomes potent, and man who is made in the image of God partakes once again the infinitude of his real nature. All religions are at one in this ultimate goal.

#### MISSION OF PROPHETS IS ONE

Religions have come either from eternal wisdom enshrined in scriptural texts like our Upanishads and Vedas, or from some great

person inspired by God. If we go to the source—after all what flows out from these can best be judged from the source from which they have flowed out—and seek out Jesus, Mohammed, Zoroaster, Krishna and Buddha and examine the lives of all these great fountain heads of the various faiths in the world, we will find that by their practical example, through their exemplary life, they have shown us what is really the very soul of the religion.

Here, again the glorious sublime unity is found for all seers depicted in themselves, in a most splendid manner, the good life, the life of absolute purity, of infinite compassion, and of sweet love. This is what lay enshrined in the divine personalities of Mohammed, Christ, Buddha, Zoroaster and all the great seers. They were the very incarnations of love, goodness, compassion, purity, wisdom, non attachment and brotherhood. They were not merely passive embodiments of these qualities, but their lives were active expressions of these great divine qualities. In every action and every word they uttered when they moved among mortals in the universe they reflected these qualities. They demonstrated the practical living of the religion which they later on gave to their followers. In this demonstration they were all at one. They all lived a godly life. They all lived love. They radiated purity and they all acted, spoke and thought with compassion, service and sacrifice.

Let us examine the religious and the prophetic utterances of these great messengers of God. Is there any religion which tells us

'Utter lies; be dishonest?' No, is the answer. Is there any religion which says 'Hate people, develop hatred and anger?' No again is the answer. Is there any religion which tells you, 'Be impure. Be immoral?' No, is the answer. Every religion, on the other hand, lays stress upon a life of truth, of absolute purity, of belief in God, of compassion and tenderness,

a life of sacrifice, of goodness in thought, word and deed, a life devoid of hatred. Every religion has given a way of life to its followers as the ideal to be followed, in order to attain the goal, and that way is one and the same. It is a life of divine qualities. It is a life as practically demonstrated by each one of these prophets.

Therefore, from whichever angle we approach and study the subject of religion, from whichever angle we see it, we find that religion is one, all faiths are one and that all prophets have lived the same life of ethical perfection, divine compassion, goodness and oneness. They have been inspired by the same vision of brotherhood of God and brotherhood of mankind. Thus, we find that, however, much we may try to close our eyes to this fact, the oneness in all faiths is proclaiming itself in a living, irresistible manner through the ideal life lived by these prophets, through the very motive force underlying each faith and religion through the oneness in the very process that these religious achievements are to be worked out, and through the ultimate conception of the destination which each one of these faiths wants its followers to realize.

We have, therefore, always to put before mankind these shining and unifying links which make all faiths one. These different faiths are, as it were, so many beautiful flowers that go to make a beautiful bouquet which we offer at the 'feet' of the Almighty Being. Let us ever remember these unifying notes that are at the basis of all faiths. Let us ever try to declare this unity to all mankind so that the external strife, rivalry and exclusiveness that have been brought about by losing sight of these fundamental unifying factors, may once for all removed from the face of this fair earth and peace and goodwill amongst mankind may come to prevail for all time.

#### UNITY IN DIVERSITY

Sri Krishna has declared in the Gita, 'As different beings variously approach Me, even

so according to his approach I reveal Myself.' Taking this as the great truth, a small analogy will be found to be a very interesting way of effectively realizing the unity of different religions and faiths.

Different people are travelling, they are all travelling in *different directions*. A devotee from Gujarat has got leave from his work, he wants to pay a visit to Benares and worship Sri Viswanath. Another devotee from Assam has retired and wishes to make a round of pilgrimage and wants to take a dip at the Dasaswamedha Ghat and worship Varanasi purapati. A devotee from Calcutta also wishes to worship the great Viswanath at Kashi. Someone from Madras is similarly urged to go and worship Sri Viswanath at Veranesi. Thus, various people from different parts of India are travelling towards 'different' directions to different 'places'. One wishes to go to Varanasi, the other to Badras, the other to Kashi, and so on, while the fact is their destination is one, though called by different names.

Each one goes his own way. The Chettiar from the South takes a plane because he is wealthy. The great devotee from Assam does the whole journey on foot. The men from Calcutta travel by train. The men from Gujarat may use different means of conveyance. A Sadhu from Rishikesh also goes to Banaras on foot.

The very important fact which I wish everyone to grasp is this. Nodoubt, they are all thinking that they are going to different places (Varanasi, Banaras and Kashi). Their mode of travel is also different. Whatever difference there may be in the external way of proceeding, the process worked out is a progressive approach to that central purpose — to have Darshan of Viswanath. Two important things which I want you to understand are these. One is the misconception of 'going to different places' due to the different names by which they call Banaras. The second is they are apparently working out a

contrary process. One is moving to South. One is moving towards North. The man from Gujarat is proceeding Eastward, and the man from Assam is going Westward. They are all going in opposite directions. And yet they are proceeding to the same goal!

This will explain how the various faiths which seem to be going in apparently opposite ways, yet take the followers to the same goal. There is another important factor. The Chettiar from Madras, during his journey to Kashi approaches nearer and nearer the Himalayas, his progress towards the desired place is taking him nearer the Himalayas. Whereas, the Sadhu from Rishikesh, who is also going to Banaras goes farther and farther from Himalayas. Two absolutely contrary processes! But, curiously enough both achieve the same result.

This analogy illustrates the paradoxical phenomenon of how two processes, which are seemingly contradictory to each other and seemingly different in their results, have as their ultimate result a single goal. Each one has his desire fulfilled, though each man may maintain that he has done something different from what the other man has done. One may say, 'I have come to Kashi, travelling northwards.' Another may say, 'I have come to Banaras, travelling southwards.'

Even so, the ultimate goal, sustenance and source of the entire universe, is God. In reaching Him, souls from different states of

consciousness come towards a single goal, however different and however conflicting the apparent outward processes in this quest may seem to be. These eternal differences and seeming contradictions in the eternal structure of the religious pattern and the practices need not and cannot deny the essential factor of the unity. Therefore, the best thing to do is not to cling to our own conceptions conceived in a limited mind which has not reached the state of impartial wisdom.

#### IN THE FOOT-STEPES OF SAINTS

Let us remember the great declaration of the Mahabharata:

'The Srotis differ, the Smritis also differ. The real essence of the ancient truth is hidden, as it were, in a cave. You cannot have direct access to it. Therefore, follow the way through which the great souls have trodden and gone before us, leaving footprints on the sands of time.'

The best way for us is to humbly and devoutly study the lives of these great ones and reckn the ideal examples which they have given us in their own sublime personalities, and try to mould ourselves upon the pattern of their ideal lives. These would be the greatest way of achieving the true consciousness of the abolute oneness of all mankind, the unity of all religion, and the oneness of all life. Universality, or cosmic consciousness, can best be achieved only by this way.

#### Purpose of Objective Meditation

The Supreme Reality is fundamentally formless, nameless and attributeless. But one has force to associate that Supreme Reality in the hour of meditation, or at any other time, with the positive qualities of virtue and goodness, nobility and grace, so that one might free oneself from carnality, greed, hypocrisy, selfishness and a multitude of other vices through the ennobling, regenerative forces of purity, selflessness, compassion and holy love. These attributes, together with similar 'superimposed aspects' of the Reality, omnipresence and omniscience as for example, and its symbolisation in the form of ☸, or the cross, or any Avatar, or saint, should be the basis of meditation for all spiritual aspirants.

# Common Fundamentals of Monotheistic Religions

SRI M. K. SPENCER

[Bombay]

*I. God and His Nature.*

1. The absolute unitariness of God is irrevocable. 'There is no God but one God.'
2. His absolute supremacy is undeniable.
3. He is the creator, the sustainer, the preserver and the destroyer.
4. He is omnipresent, ontologically transcendental, omniscient and omnipotent.

*II. God and the Archangels.*

1. The Cosmos is governed by God, the unmanifest, the impersonal. That Supreme Being projects itself to the comprehension of men through archangels, or *Amsha*, or *Spirita*, or *Elohi*.

2. Archangels are the messengers of God—the aura Reality having multiplied itself into many has created a link between itself and its creations through the means of divine archangels.

*III. Angels in relation to God and His Archangels.*

1. Angels, too, are created by God, and they are assigned different tasks in the governance of the Cosmos like the archangels who have a superior and a wider responsibility.

*IV. The Supremacy of the Divine Moral Order.*

1. This supremacy is seen in the government of the Coemos, though at times incomprehensible to common mortals, through the Law of *Ashu*, or righteousness, or *Rta*.

*V. The Supremacy of Thought over Speech and Action.*

1. Creation is the result of Divine Thought, or the projection of the Supreme Consciousness, which preceded the Divine Word, or *Vaca*, from which creation sprang.

2. Thought induces impulse; impulse induces desire; desire impels speech and action.

*VI. God and the Pravashis (*Atma* or spirit).*

1. On the philosophy of *Atma* or *Pravashi* is based the doctrine of immanence and transcendence.
2. While the *Pravashis* of the individual souls work from the within, *Spirita*, *Mainyu*, or the holy spirit, works from the without.
3. Divine Life is eternal and perfect and human life has to evolve to this perfection of the Divine Life, which will *ipso facto* continue for eternity and thus imply its immortality.

*VII. The Four Paths to Godhead.*

1. The enumeration in all religions of the fundamental principles of aspiring towards Godhead centres round the four Paths, viz., the Path of absolute devotion and love to God, the Path of selfless service or action in the spirit of righteousness without attachment or expectation of results thereof, the Path of self-control through the means of concentration and meditation, and the Path of self-enquiry, self-analysis and discrimination.

*VIII. The Laws of the Invisible World.*

1. Vibration is the law of primeval life.
2. The material world is governed by two opposite principles or *Mainyus*, which are *Satura* (*Spirita*) and *Tumas* (*Angra*). The balance is maintained by the principle of motion, or *Rajas*.
3. The law of cause and effect is incapable. Just as one would sow, so also should one reap, though not in the immediate present but sometime in the future, at all cost.

# The Means and the End

SRI SUDARSHAN SHARMA M A

[Rajasthan]

Religion has two aspects, viz., the essential and the non-essential. While the non-essential or ritualistic aspect is subject to change occasioned by local situations change, even nations, customs and notions the essential factors remain the same. If we are to trace the essential unity of all the religions, we must look into the essential aspects alone. If religion is a constant and permanent factor in human life it must be something like an instinct with man. Nothing can be permanent which is not rooted in human nature. Since religion has survived the ravages of time, turns of centuries and the attacks of the hostile forces it would be legitimate to conclude that it is inherently inseparable from human life. In this sense, though religions will come and go, the religion will remain constant. It is also clear that 'Religion is in danger' is a mistaken slogan. What happens to 'be in danger' perhaps is the vested interests behind the institution of religion. Whatever comes between man and God will not long survive.

## WHAT IS RELIGION

But what is religion? This question though legitimate is still easier asked than answered. The real religious experience along with its object is in principle, transcendental to human thought and ascent cannot be within the grasp of logical argument, much less manageable by scientific experiment. One can only feel the lurking presence of certain invisible factors, but one cannot describe them. This is the reason why the eastern sages, upon being asked about the nature of Brahman resorted to silence—indicating thereby that Brahman is of the same 'stuff' as all else is made of. Pilate asked Jesus what truth was, in reality, and Jesus kept silence. It was because Pilate demanded a verbal definition when truth was only a certain Way like Dharma. Jesus himself had earlier said, 'I am the Way, the Truth

and the Life.' When people grew inquisitive about the root cause such as God, soul, etc., the Buddha, too remained non-committal. If he spoke at all, it was only to say that when the house was on fire what did it matter whether the one that set fire had red hair? The need is to quench the fire rather than go about making enquiries.

Just such is the case with the world we live in. It is already ablaze with the flames of suffering. For our purpose this is the truth. And there is the Way given by Buddha, to end this suffering. Once while teaching the multitude, he took a few leaves from a tree and asked if those were all or were there more leaves on the tree. 'Lord, there are yet many more,' said the people. 'Even so,' said Buddha, 'there are many more things in my mind. But what I have told you is sufficient to free you from suffering.' Mere intellectual knowledge that is entirely unrelated to the purposes of life is productive of vanity and conceit. One should not talk of what one does not really understand.

Religion, as we have seen, is concerned with the imponderable factors in life. Yet we are called upon to describe that which does not admit of description. For those of us who are not gifted with the direct apprehension with the reality, the only other way open is to analyse our own little experience and infer the nature of its object. Upon analysis, the first fact that strikes us is that of fear. The element of fear is evident. As soon as a body is born, we begin to wall. We cannot reconcile with the external environment. The environment is alien, overpowering, cruel and indifferent. This fear under changed forms pursues man from cradle to grave. When he grows up, he finds that the universe is vast and the distance is measured in light years. There are some stars that have emitted light millions of years ago and yet the light has not reached the earth!

What is the status of a man in such immensities of time and space! He is like a fly involved in a vast tempest.

### THE RELIGIOUS QUEST

The presence of fear makes man reflect over his own position. He finds yet another feeling present in him. It is of loneliness. He finds himself helpless and stranded and a strange feeling of being abandoned steals upon him quite unawares. He looks for a prop, a friend, a helper. His very inner being cries out in sheer anguish. He wants to be owned and appreciated. Here exactly the religious quest begins.

These elements are universal and, therefore, they must have an objective meaning. The urge for help makes us think of the presence of help. The universe is at heart friendly. That man is not a step-child of destiny is quite a probable inference. One who makes me weep is the one who also wiped my tears. This is enough.

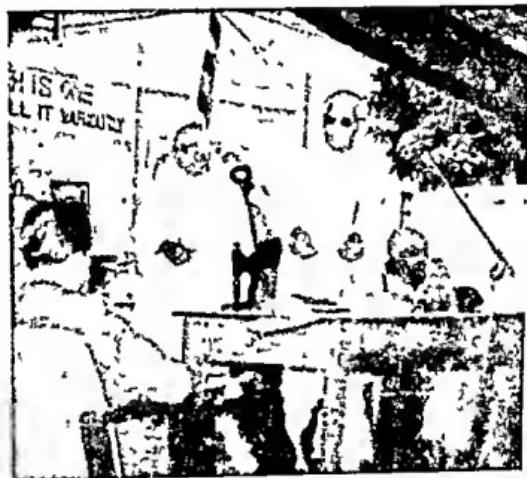
Man is essentially linked with God. Somehow he thinks he is detached from God. Whenever you feel you are detached from God, this fear and this loneliness haunts you. God is like the good hound that runs after a man in order to bring him back to the proper path. But, not realising this, man runs away. The hound chases him, constantly warning him that he is on the wrong path. At last, when tired of knocking at various doors, he falls down. God comes to him and says, 'Come with Me; I have come to help you and gather you

unto Myself.'

Man is actually made in the image of God; God alone knows why in this temporary period, he is detached from Him. He knocks at every portal except the portal of God. This is the big mystery. It is because of ignorance. Man is made in the image of God, he is going back to God, but in the intermediate stages, he is tossed about by his own varied pranks! There is a prop for man; and this prop comes from a genuine desire arising deep down in the recesses of the heart that a link should be established between him and God.

### MAN'S LINK WITH GOD

This profound linking in the heart of man cannot be explained in words. It is experienced when the prayerful heart longs for help, and at that time, the layers of ignorance and artificial relations he has created are brushed aside for the moment, and he is linked with the primal Source. When the darkness is



Sri Gauri Pravadi speaking at one of the sessions of the Parliament of Religions (please see page 33). Behind him standing is Dr. Mohammed Hafiz Syed, a delegate representing Islam.

removed in the heart of man, the Light filters into it. This again may be the reason why it is said: 'Knock, and the door shall be opened.' 'Seek, and you shall find it.' 'Ask and it shall be given to you.' The total self of man should have a burning desire for help, and that help will come in the form of a spiritual insight. There will be a new birth. One then becomes a different man. His attitude to life is changed; his motives are transformed.

Three men might be running along the road: let us imagine. For us, all of them are merely

running One man is running because he is a coward and is afraid of something Another man is running because somebody is calling to him for help The third man is running to get something he has forgotten The motives vary But all are running So also many people are walking along the road Who knows, there may be an immortal Sage amongst them In external appearance all men are the same Only those who have advanced in spirituality can recognise the sage Only Plato could recognise Socrates Others thought he was the corrupter of youth and put him in prison and ultimately killed him

The divine element is common in all of these *svarah sarvabhutanam hriddeserjuna tishhati* 'The Kingdom of God is within you' *Ishwaram idam sartam* 'The Lord pervades everything' All these indicate that the Lord is the universal, common binding factor Sooner or later, all individuals will rally round Him He is the principle of life, creation, not of annihilation If we cling to Him, there is unity If we are detached from Him there is no end of diversity Those who conquered the weaknesses of the flesh and rose into the life of the Spirit, rose to a different order of Reality At that level we shall know the definition of Religion If a definition is given in terms of language people will not understand The sages have therefore given us a ready made way of life If we follow that way without questioning we will reach the goal without even knowing it The Noble Eight fold Path the Sermon on the Mount the Doctrine of Yoga—these represent the Way

Literal interpretations of the scriptures,

however, will not satisfy us We are not satisfied with a literal interpretation of religious statements Various occasions will arise when doubts will crop in No one is expected to be entirely free from doubts by referring only to scriptures They do not answer all problems Hence, one must use commonsense But to doubt the efficacy of idealism, the ultimate salvation of man, the moral nature of the universe the ultimate destiny of man and the universe, is destructive If you have doubt about these, then you will be drowned in a sea of sorrow and ruin If we analyse the utterances of the Lord and accept the true meaning, we shall realise the truth of the various guarantees given by the Lord Otherwise the guarantees look like egotistic expressions!

Jesus said 'Be of good cheer I have overcome the world Krishna said 'Na me bhakti pranasyat' 'My devotee is never lost' In Ramayana you have the promise of the Lord Even now if my devotee says 'I am yours' I give him fearlessness' It is not that by verbally saying 'I am yours' man can gain this state of fearlessness You should act up to that surrender Your actions should reveal that you are truly His Then the Lord will guarantee you fearlessness and security against all forces This is His Vow

If man does not believe in God our Shastras say, he will not get permanent peace In his life now there will be peace then again turmoil the two will be continually alternating If you want to enjoy perpetual happiness if you want to enjoy permanent peace link your self with the Lord That is real religion

## Fear and Worry

Fear is the root cause of worry If allowed to persist worry is capable of denigrating many a fine quality of character and wring out the angel of peace from one's mind To encounter fear and worry one has to cultivate a clear conscience and a deep conviction in the merit of truth and goodness It is only the oppressive influence of deliberate wrong deeds camouflaged hypocrites, moral inexactitudes and ethical trespasses that engender fear and worry

—Sri Swami Sivananda

rituals in the light of their own imagination—that the multitude of formalities that are attributable to various conventional religiousness for the most part become thoroughly benighted and instead of serving as a unifying factor in the field of conflicting diversities, these formalities have succeeded only in inspiring religious discord and bickerings.

I must say, however, that all formalities are by no means unnecessary—as for example, going to the chorob or the temple serves to maintain a religious consciousness among the faithful—but the question is how far the services and the formalities adopted in the church or the temple are useful in one's practical life, in solving individual, social and communal problems, how far indeed do they justify themselves in the light of rational inquiry, judicious reasoning and empirical conclusions, and how far, above all, are they justified in creating, though not always directly and openly, a sense of spite, hate, contempt and, sometimes, serious antagonism against the followers of another faith, instead of promoting and emphasising a true consciousness of spiritual oneness and practical evaluation of ethical and moral obligations.

tum between one community and another, one race and another, one nation and another?

#### DUTY OF THE PARLIAMENT

The ideal of a religious Parliament should be to inspire and further a true knowledge of religion chiefly among the multitude of masses as well as the professional religious classes in all parts of the world, while confining itself to the propagation of the rational aspects of diverse faiths from the point of view of their practical utility in making one's life happier, nobler, more peaceful and more harmonious, together with providing a wider sense of responsibility to the individual in his obligations to the community and the world at large.

A true understanding of the fundamental principles of religion and their practices in one's daily life will go a long way in solving many problems that confront mankind today—individual, national, and inter-national—and the conflicts of political ideologies would then perhaps be remedied to a very great extent. Let us hope for the best. May all be happy and prosperous.

## Religion, the Basis of Life

SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA

**Religion is the basis of life**  
 It is the basis of all noble human endeavours  
 Understand the essential unity of all religions,  
 That underlies all apparent differences  
 Get rid of superstitions accretions  
 Devise methods for putting into practice  
 The recognition of a sweet unity.  
 Conduct Parliament of all religions  
 Gather the leaders of faiths  
 On a common platform  
 Hold common prayers.  
 Deal with the practical side of religion  
 Bring spiritual regeneration  
 Peace, unity, harmony and concord

**ONE CASTE, ONE RELIGION, ONE GOD**  
 There is only one caste,  
 The caste of humanity  
 There is only one religion,  
 The religion of Love or the religion of Vedanta  
 There is only one Dharma,  
 The Dharma of Truthfulness  
 There is only one Law,  
 The Law of Cause and Effect  
 There is only one God,  
 The omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent Lord  
 There is only one Language,  
 The Language of the Heart or the Language of  
 Silence

### ESSENTIALS OF RELIGIONS

There is one Supreme Being—

He is Existence, Knowledge and Bliss

Absolute;

He is the Indweller of all beings;

In Him alone can we find Eternal Bliss,  
Everlasting Peace and Immortality.

Atttain Him through Self-realisation,  
Purification of heart, faith, devotion,  
And ceaseless meditation.

Share with others what you have.

Love all, serve all, be kind to all.

Feel His Presence everywhere.

These are the essentials of religions.

The fundamentals of all religions are the same.

Only the non-essentials differ.

Buddhism has got the Noble Eightfold Path.

It corresponds to Sadachara,

Or right-conduct of Hinduism.

The 'Sermon on the Mount' in the Bible

Corresponds to the Noble Eightfold Path of

Buddhism

And the Sadachara of Hinduism.

All these aim at ethical perfection.

There is God or the Supreme Being;

In Him alone you will find supreme Peace,

Eternal Bliss, Freedom, Perfection and

Immortality :

Never hurt others' feelings.

Speak the truth.

Do not kill any sentient being.

Cultivate divine virtues.

Love all. Be kind to all.

Be good; do good; be charitable.

Purify the heart; serve humanity.

Share with others the best you have.

Love your neighbour as your ownself.

Cultivate universal brotherhood.

Destroy all barriers

That separate and divide humanity.

These are the essentials of all religions.

### TRUE RELIGION

Erase egoism, likes and dislikes;

Annihilate lust, greed and anger;

Cultivate divine virtues;

Abandon evil qualities;

Control the sense and the mind;

Give up desires, cravings and 'mine-ness';

Have perfect faith in God,

In the Scriptures and in the advice of your

Guru;

Practise non-injury, veracity and celibacy;

Enquire 'Who am I?'

Know the Self, and be free.

This is true religion.

To be just, to be friendly to everyone.

To be sincere and true to oneself,

To meditate on the Immortal Self within,

To be good and to do good to all

And make others happy,

To comfort the sick and the afflicted,

To serve the poor,—

Is indeed the real religion.

Real religion is not

A mere intellectual assent

To a certain creed or dogma,

It is realisation and becoming.

He who has equal vision and balanced mind

Under all conditions and circumstances

Is truly religious.

### ONE ESSENCE

I

Behind all names and forms is the one,  
nameless, formless Essence.

Behind all agencies is the one, supreme  
Governor.

Behind all lights is the one Light of Satchida-  
nanda.

Behind all sounds there is the soundless,  
supreme Silence.

Behind all teachers is the one, supreme  
Divine Teacher.

Thou art That—*Tat Tuam Asi*. O Rama!

II

Behind all these perishable things is the one,  
imperishable Absolute.

Behind all these motions is the one, motionless  
Infinite.

Behind time, minutes and days, is the one,  
Timeless Eternity.

Beyond hatred, riots and wars, is the one  
Hidden, all consuming Love.

Thou art That, Tat Tum A+o, O Ram!

### III

The essence of religion  
Is tolerance and Self Knowledge.  
Religion is not acclaimed by  
Marks on the forehead,

Matted locks and long beard  
Standing in the hot sun or in ice cold water.  
Not orange coloured robe,  
Not shaven head,  
Neither circumcision rituals,  
Nor elaborate, priestly devotions  
Proclaim the true religion.  
But a life of goodness, purity, service,  
detachment and selflessness  
Is the true religious life.

## Perspective of Integral Approach

SRI MASAHARU TANIGUCHI  
[Japan]

Originally *Seicho no le* was the name of the monthly journal which I have been publishing in order to provide a method of training for mortal culture to the interested readers. I have received many letters of thanks, saying that diseases for which medical treatment had been of no use, were cured by psychical practices. At first I thought it was very strange, because the journal was primarily meant for fostering a spiritual movement. From this experience I conclude that any rational spiritual perspective does not only serve as an ideal confined to the intellectual sphere but it has a far greater influence on the entire human personality, when practised in right earnest, and it can as well cure many a persisting chronic disease, confer a sound, healthy mind and build up a fine, noble character.

Thus *Seicho no le* has come to be a way of good life, rather than a particularized doctrine devoted to limited ends.

*Seicho no le* makes all people good friends and all religions harmonious to one another. It makes religion a practical code of ethical and useful living. To my belief, Shintoism is very good, Buddhism is very good, Christianity is very good, and so also other religions, according to the social history and the temperament of

the relatively different but spiritually one people that inhabit our holy mother earth. When one understands the very essence of one's religion, one learns that all religions are integrally bound by a common ideal. The consciousness of that ideal helps the Christian to have a better attitude towards a Buddhist and vice versa. That consciousness helps one to transcend over the mutual differences and oddities that are so glaringly conspicuous in external formalities and convections, subordinates beliefs and convictions and all such divergences that separate the religious of the world.

I remember there was a movement many years ago—when Mr Tokonami was the Home Minister of Japan—for unifying our three national religions namely, Shintoism, Christianity and Buddhism. Various efforts were made for making this honest attempt a success, including Naniwa bushi which propagated the lives of the 47 'Loyal Retainers,' but the movement ended in failure. It was said at that time that every individual had the liberty to believe in any particular religion but one was expected to be respectful to other faiths and foster a certain amount of mutual fraternization in the light of universal amity.

and goodwill. Probably, there were some drawbacks to the introduction and sincere practice and understanding of the gospel of religious unity, and hence the movement did not succeed.

Christianity says, "Man is the son of God." Christ said, "Thy faith hast cured thee" and "If thou only hast faith as small as a mustard seed and tell the mountain to move into the sea, and it will obey thy order." All these are different expressions of the Buddhist theory, "This world is the reflection of the mind." The mind is reflected in the flesh and either makes people fall ill or cures them. Children's scholarship, business prosperity, sinking of a mountain, eruption of a volcano, an earthquake,—all these depend upon the working of the individual and the cosmic mind. The individual and the Cosmos are one, and the process of the realization of this oneness is called religion.

Shintoism is a living religion. I do not mean that Shintoism which the aggressive militarists exploited for their own ends, but I mean the real one which teaches that everybody is the son of God and that one should respect all others as children of God. Every female is called *hime-no-mikoto*, and every male *hiko-no-mikoto*, in Japanese language. *Hiko* and *hime* mean sons and daughters, respectively, of the Spiritual Being. The same ideal is cherished, I believe, by every other religion, and expressed in every other language.

What is wanted is sincerity of heart and a liberal, tolerant, detached and rational perspective of life and religion. The greatest need of the day is earnest practice of the fundamental tenets of religion, breadth of vision and certain amount of selflessness. This is the ideal that *Seicho-no-Ie* has been aiming at, with heartening success and fulfilment.

## Harmony in Diversity

SRI SWAMI HARISHARANANANDA

(Professor of Bhakti Yoga, Yoga Vedanta Forest University, Ananda Kutir, Rishikesh)

There has never been any quarrel among those who have actually practised religion; there is quarrel only among the preachers of religions.

The practical aspects of religion have been beautifully summed up in the following Sloka which enumerates the ten essential ingredients of Dharma:

*Dhriti Kshama Damo-Asteayam Saucham-*

*Indriyanigrahah*

*Dheera-Vidya Satyam-Akrodho Dasakam*

*Dharma-laksanam*

"Steadfastness, forgiveness, self restraint, non-stealing, purity, control of senses, intelligence (discrimination), knowledge (of the scriptures which treat of the right and the wrong), truthfulness and absence of anger—these ten virtues are the essentials of Dharma."

No one can deny this: there is no religion in the world which advocates the opposite of these.

People say that if there is only one religion in the world there will be no wars, no riots, no quarrels. Do people belonging to the same religion not quarrel among themselves? Why go so far; do not people born of the same parents—brothers—quarrel among themselves? The defect does not lie in the variety of religions; but somewhere else.

Where there is the spirit of renunciation, toleration and catholicity, there is always Shanti. People belonging to different religions, but endowed with the spirit of renunciation and co-operation can live together in perfect harmony. By 'renunciation,' I mean the eschewing of personal vanities, sentimental

pride and egotistic dogmatism.

Behold an orange. It seems to be one whole fruit from outside, the inside of it is divided into a dozen parts! Similarly our aim should be a judicious and harmonious integration of diverse faiths and temperaments

Let there be a hundred religious beliefs, let there be a hundred independent nations but, let there be genuine love in the heart of man, and let commonsense dwell in the minds of all. Only then will there be permanent peace, harmony and brotherhood in the world

## The Vedas On Unity

Composed in the early dawn of civilization, the following verses are an illustrious example of a profound conviction in the unity of existence which occupied the minds of the sages of yore. The first five verses are from the earliest piece of Sanskrit literature, composed no one knows when, but certainly before 1500 B.C., if not earlier. The earliest of the Upanishads, viz., 'Aitareya Upanishad,' appeared much later, and a few centuries hence the Atharva Veda was composed, to which the last six verses, quoted below, belong. Even these date back beyond the age of Gautama Buddha, i.e., prior to sixth century B.C. Certain scholars, Lokamanya Tilak among them, ascribe to the oldest verses in the Rig Veda any date within 3000 and 5000 B.C. But its authenticity is open to question. The sentiments of these verses invariably find their expression in the Mahabharata, which was begun about 500 B.C., and to which was inserted the Bhagavad Gita perhaps as late as the second century A.D. These religious thoughts have also inspired the Puranas composed during the first ten centuries of the Christian era. The English translation of the verses given below is by Swami Bhumananda Saraswati, compiler of *The Voice of the Vedas* (*Ecclesiastes Divina*). The translation is not precisely literal, but is rather intended to convey the meaning of the verses. The diction of the Vedas is nearly

always mystic and sometimes, antique, and therefore any attempt at translation is exposed to counter-interpretation.—Editor.

### FROM THE RIG VEDA

योगे योगे तवस्तर वजे वाजे द्वामहे ।  
उत्ताप्य इन्द्रमूत्ये ॥

Let us all, in union like true friends, invoke upon God, best known in His revealed Law (of Nature), for our protection and help in all our endeavours for the attainment of things difficult to achieve and in all our battles of life (I, 30, 7)

स उमिषु रसे हृषकामे विश्वान्वर्य आ ।  
इलसपदे उमिष्यसे स नो धूया मर ॥



*Sri Swami Sivananda with Mr. James Burke Correspondent of Life Magazine, New York, who attended the Parliament of Religions*

O adorable Almighty! In the whole universe Thou dost the work of harmonizing and uniting, and most fully reveal Thyself in the world. We, therefore, beseech Thee to bestow upon us in every way all the means that will enable us to live in peace and harmony. (X. 191, 1)

ॐ गच्छत्य सं वस्त्वं सं यो मनासा लानपद् ।  
देवा भागं यथा पूर्वं उज्जानना उपासते ॥

Let all your activities be so directed as to lead you to one common goal; let there be co-operation held among you in a common tongue. Let all your minds be all of one accord to acquire knowledge of the various lore. Do then, as the enlightened did in all ages, perform your tasks in life in co-operation and harmony with mind in full agreement for the acquisition of knowledge, and worship God, the real object of your devotion. (2)

‘उमानो मनः सर्वतिः उमानी समार्थ मनः  
सद चित्तेष्यन् ॥

Let the object of your coosels be acceptable to all and the place of your assembly common, your minds in accord and your hearts united together. (3)

उमानी व आद्यात् उमानं हृदयाणि वः ।  
उमानमस्तु वो मनो यथा वः तुष्टाति ॥

Let your object in life be one and the same, your hearts equal and your minds in full agreement so that an excellent, common status of life may be achieved for all. (4)

#### FROM THE ATHARVA VEDA

पृथृव्यं कामनापतिदेषं इषोमि वः ।  
श्रन्यो अन्यपाप्य हृष्टे ॥

I ordain for you concord of heart, unanimity of mind and freedom from hatred in dealings

with each other. Love one another in all ways. (III. 30. 1)

मा भ्रता भ्रातं दिव्याना स्वसारुत स्वसा ।  
साक्षः सर्वा भृता वाच वःत भद्रय ॥

Neither a brother should hate his brother, nor the sister be unkind to her sister. You ought to speak with one another most gently, being of one mind and keeping the same ideal before you. (3)

येन देवा न विष्वित नो च विद्विते विषः ।  
सरक्षणो वद्ध वा रहे संजानं पुण्येषः ॥

I ordain in your home the Vedic principles from which the enlightened never err, nor do they bear hatred towards one another, so that they may serve as the right guiding knowledge for all men. (4)

समश्वोऽपि वृद्धंताय नामिनिशमितः ॥

Worship the adorable God all of you together (attaching yourselves to Him) just as the spokes of the wheel are attached to the nave from all around. (6)

अथ चोकारः उमारात्माहृष्टाप्येषु तुष्टात्मानो ते वासु ।  
देवा हृष्टामृते रक्षामाणाः एवंश्रातः वो अस्तु ॥

I enjoin on all of you to be mutually helping one another, to be united in your mind and to have one goal in life. You should, like the wise of all ages, ever cherish liberation of your souls, and to this end may peace of mind increase among you, evening and morning. (7)

सं वः पृथृता स्तवः सं मनाति स्तुताना ।  
सं वीप्य भृशाप्रस्तिमंगः स वो अशीगमत् ॥

Let your bodies and minds work together in harmony for the achievement of the common ideal (general welfare). It is for this that God, the Protector of the universe, has brought you together in life. (VI. 34. 1)

“Yoga is not dependent upon the possession and exercise of any abnormal faculties. It only requires you to develop the faculties that you already possess but that are at present lying dormant and obscure within you, and the chief instrument that is required to be utilised is the one that is a common monopoly to the whole of humanity, namely, the human mind.”

# A Symposium on Religious Unanimity

## CONCEPTION OF GOD

(Collected by Sir Duncan Greenlee, M.A.)

*Advaita* God is all, the source and goal of all, which evolves from Him as an illusory universe, never really separate from His all-pervading nirod. He is beyond all qualities, beyond all thoughts and can be seen through the total silencing of thought as the one Self of all.

*Vishishtadvaita* God is in and shuns all, the source and goal of all, who creates all as a play with the aid of His own Power. Formless He is yet seen through forms, he has all qualities of infinite perfection. He manifests as Vyajis (deity), Avatara (incarnation), Archa (divine images), Antaryamin (inner ruler of every being).

*Jainism* There is no God beyond the perfection of man. He is "the highest, the noblest, the fullest manifestation of all the powers which lie latent in the soul of man."

*Huayana* The Law (Dharma), that which "really is," the ineffable "Self" realised by the Buddhas. This is but an inevitable Law, and the Truth is not concerned with a first cause or a last effect which are neither desired nor taught.

*Mahayana* The Reality is the Void equally present in all beings, ind-sinable and un-negatable, realised by intuition the eternal Buddha, in three Aspects (1) Dharmakaya, the one eternal Reality, absolute Truth and Being the All, (2) Sambhogakaya, the personal God, an ideal Bliss body whereby teaching comes in the saints as Light and Wisdom, and (3) Nirmanakaya, the physical body assumed by Avatars, both full and partial, as in Hinduism.

*Egyptian* The Supreme Light known as Ra, manifestation of the infinite Atum, who by uttering the creative word brought the whole universe into being, of the gods, men,

animals, plants, stones, clouds, and so on,—the Guardian and Ruler of all, one with the Inner Light in every being.

*Mithraism* The unconquered Son of heavenly Light, mediator between earth and heaven, so mediator, friendly to souls (Mitra), Commander in the war on darkness, and Saviour from the body of death, He transmits the Aravano or "glory," and so was eagerly worshipped by the Roman soldiers. Boundless Time, the Supreme First Cause, stands behind Him.

*Confucianism* The Light of perfect, absolute reason or law in heaven, nature, the source and goal of all, and so the ideal of man, the real, truth, harmony, the silently active ruler and straight path, innests in all.

*Taoism* Impersonal Tao, the eternal, omnipresent Being of Law, ineffable source and goal, who motivlessly and spontaneously works for universal good. Simple and invisible action association of force and beauty,—this is the Void or Abyss, manifesting as Yin (dark, female, passive) and Yang (bright, male, active), harmonised by Chhi (breath of life). The three jewels desired, are Lao tzu, Phaoku and Yuhuang Shang ti.

*Zarathushtrian* One perfect Being, infinite, eternal, omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent, manifesting as Two Spirits of Light (Aburamazda) and Dark (Anramainyu) also as the six Amesha-spentas love wisdom purity righteousness, royalty power, grace humility devotion, perfection fullness and immortality.

*Jewish* God is one, the unique, eternal King, judge, creator of all, formless spirit and ineffable name. Transcendent independent source, demanding righteousness as His holy, going wisely and mightily all creation.

through history to His ends, He is the loving spouse of His own people.

*Christian:* Infinite, eternal, almighty, unpersonal, loving, holy, just creator-ruler of all, the source of life and light, who can be reached through His creation and a dedicated righteous life. He is in three Persons: the unmanifest Father, the manifest Son, and the uniting Spirit of love-wisdom. Incarnation was His plan to overcome sin by taking the 'Karma' on His own body, being one with all mystically. Founded the teaching Church to carry on the work for all time.

*Muslim:* Transcendent, infinitely great and almighty Creator, King, wise Providence, omniscient, omnipresent Light, Lord of life and justice, kind and pitiful guardian of souls.

*Sufi:* The only real Being, eternal, everywhere, revealed in creation to win love for the eternal Beauty, the real object of all love. No real evil exists; it is only the necessary condition to let the good manifest.

*Sikh:* One, absolute, eternal, infinite, true, incomprehensible, yet manifested through His creation and by grace, illuminating and never born, nameless, unmanifested, king, father, lover, pervading all, the ocean of pure Being wherein all abide, the source and goal of all.

*Stoic:* The monistic, all-pervading fire, the first cause, single but made up of seed-powers and pervaded by reason (Logos). A kindly Providence and ruler, at the same time one and many, the divine spirit of incorporeal wisdom.

*Neo-Platonic:* One beyond all being and understanding, formless, permeating nature, spiritual, knowable reality, a trinity of the good, the true and the beautiful of spirit, object of spiritual perception; ineffable creator of space and time.

*Hermetic:* One, infinite, eternal and ineffable reality, the deathless light and life in all, omnipresent, sustaining ocean, unknown, formless and yet with all forms, nameless,

and yet with names such as God and Father, revealed through creation and by words expressing His eternal thought. He alone is good, for He alone gives all, in whom is all beauty. He emanated man to seek Him through reason.

*Hindoo:* Two roots or trees: Light-good-life and dark-evil-death. Azrua, father of greatness or light manifest as the luminaries, five angelic powers of sense, reason, thought, imagination and will, and as wisdom or the religion. These five are personified as the glorious, the king of honour, the admiral one, the king of glory and the sustainer; God is a divine substance of light, not a person. The king of darkness manifests in smoke, fire, hot wind, poisonous water and gross darkness,—an odious anarchy.

*Kabbala:* God is in all, nothing is apart from Him. He willingly emanates the powers and remains infinite and unaffected; He does not create from nothing. Can be known only through negative. Withdraws Himself to create in space, as a curved mirror changes the shape of an unchanged subject, so He is changeless; this first "concentration" leads to others, and so to the ten Sephiroth in three pairs. Desire is co-eternal with Him and all abides in Him, the spirit-origin and goal of all, infinite, simple, indivisible, independent, radiating creation by thought as the Primal Will in all.

*Alchemy:* One monistic, divine Spirit immanent in man and matter.

*Freemasonry:* One impersonal great architect, in an abstract trinity of wisdom, strength and beauty.

*Spiritualism:* Supreme intelligence, the infinite, eternal, changeless, unique, first cause, just, good, omnipotent, unknown, but shown by reason as the perfect workman creator. Parent of all, can be felt and divined by lower spirits and known only by the highest; He teaches all and guides all through higher grades of spiritual beings. Interested, He judges the intention more than the deed, and His laws bring their own inevitable result.

## THE INDWELLING PRESENCE

(Collected by Dr R. F. Paper, Ph.D., New York)

## 1 Primitivism

At first, forever, lost in space, everywhere  
 The great Menitu (supernatural spirit) was.  
 He made the extended land and the sky.  
 He made the sun, the moon, the stars  
 He made them all move evenly. (*Library of American Aboriginal Lit.*, 5 171).

2 Hinduism The whole universe is filled with this Person. He possesses that purest of power of reaching everything. His hands and feet are everywhere, His eyes and ears are everywhere, He abides encompassing all in the world. (*Svetasvatara Upanishad*, 3 9 16)

3 Judaism The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch upon the evil and the good. (*Proverbs* 15 3)

4 Zoroastrianism The Eternal Lord of Wisdom (Ahura Mazda) is the most prior Thinker, whose sparks are all pervading in the limitless Light and who through His wisdom is the creator and the austainer of the immutable Law of order. (*Yasna* 31 7)

5 Taoism (a) What you call the Supreme Being (Tao),—where is it? There is nowhere where It is not. (*Giles Chuang Tzu*, 2nd ed 285.)

6 Northern Buddhism Like the blue sky, Buddha overarches everything and since he is all things, he lacks nothing. Buddha's body fills every corner of the universe, it reaches everywhere, it exists forever, its substance is Wisdom. (*Dwight Goddard Buddha and Brotherhood*, 17 18)

## 7 Confucianism

Great Heaven is intelligent.

And is with you in all your going

Great Heaven is clear seeing

And is with you in all your wanderings  
*(Chinese Classics, 4, 2, 503)*8 Christianity In Him we live and move, and have our being. (*St Paul in Acts*, 17 28)9 Islam God created man, and He knows what his soul whispers, for He is nearer to him than his jugular vein. (*Koran* 50 15)10 Sikhism The Searcher of hearts is contained in everything. God pervades the continents, the islands, the nether regions, the universe and all the worlds. (*M. A. Macauliffe Sikh Religion*, 3 264, 371)

11 Tenrikyo Shinto (a) When the sky is clear, and the wind hums in the fir trees, 'tis the heart of a God who thus reveals Himself. (b) The Universe is the body of the Deity. This Law (of heavenly reason) exists and acts in every quarter of the universe as the expression of the eternal vitality. (a) *Aston Shinto* 371, b *Tenrikyo Doctrine*, 11, 1-2)

12 Bahai Faith (a) The mirror of God's knowledge reflects with complete distinctness, precision and fidelity, the doings of all men. (b) The divine breath animates and pervades all things. (c) God is closer to man than his own self. (*Bahai World Faith*, (a) p 132, (b) p 260, (c) p 98)

13 Jainism Lord Jina is seen in all the three worlds. In the omniscient knowledge of Jina the world is reflected. That supreme and perfect Soul resides in one's heart (*Pahuda Doha*, verses 39, 59)

## THEORY OF CREATION

(Collected by Sir Duncan Greenless, M.A.)

*Advaita* The World is an 'unreal' creation of the mind, and vanishes like a dream on waking, once the imaginative mind is transcended.

*Vishistadvaita* The World is a manifestation of the Real God, and it is as real as Himself, the scene of His eternal Play.

*Jainism* The world is non living, and includes

five Principles: (1) Matter, in six states—solid, liquid intangible, invisible, gaseous or imperceptible, and atomic; (2) Motion-accompaniment, e.g., water for fish; (3) Rest-accompaniment; (4) Space, in universe and beyond; (5) Time, elaborately classified.

*Hinayana:* Matter (*Rupa*) is merely Force plus Quality (Extension, Cohesion, Heat-Cold, Motion, Colour, Taste-Essence). Its essential nature is Misery, Transience and Soullessness. Mind is a complex of constantly fluctuating mental states (*Khandas*), 52 in number.

*Mahayana:* Created by the ego-self; when destroyed along with that ego, the Reality can be perceived. It is mind-caused, but has no beginning or end, for all is a ceaseless flow of change.

*Egyptian:* Magnally produced by God's will as the theatre of human and other life; real and enduring for endless eternities.

*Mitrasim:* Composed of the four great Elements; Earth, Water, Air and fire.

*Confucianism:* Heaven and Earth are produced by *Yin* and *Yang*, maintaining all beings and changing them to a state of perfection when Poise and Harmony among them are complete.

*Taoism:* Produced by the interaction of *Yin* and *Yang* under the influence of *Chi*, it bore all creatures. The Heavenly Tao manifests as Nature, in eternal Law, and in the nature of each being. Because it is selfless, it endures for ever.

*Zoroastrianism:* Created by God's word (the *Ahuricairya*), the Law of all Righteousness, out of nothing. In two sectors Light-

Good and Dark-Evil, ruled by God through Angels under Him, while evil creatures are under the control of *Anraumanya*, the Evil Spirit.

*Judaism:* Created by God's power through the utterance of a word, as one united universe of Heaven and Earth ruled by Him alone. God is everywhere in it; so there is no demiurge; there are no evil powers.

*Christianity:* Created from nothing as the scene of life and the school for men who are to be trained for either Heaven or Hell. Animals, having no responsible will or choice, can have no future; so too plants. Angels are also created to live in Heaven and to do God's will as pure spirits.

*Islam:* Created from nothing to manifest God's power and goodness through the expression of His will in a single word. So, it can be destroyed and made again when He wills. Heaven and Hell are abodes of the good and the wicked, at their own choice, and as the result of their own acts.

*Sufism:* Its first cause is Love, the essence of all religions. It is essentially good, even sin being a part of God's perfection. Evil is a privation, non-being, a mere nothing. The Reality is one, and the "Divine Names reflect light on the darkness of the non-being."

*Sikhism:* It is good in itself, and only if preferred to God. By God's will it is ceaselessly being made in countless planes, so that He might give Himself to beings in all blissfulness. It is real because pervaded by Him, the one Reality, but dream-like because transient, arising in Him and then after ages passing away unto Him again.

## THE LAW OF KARMA

(Collected by Dr. K. F. Piper, Ph. D., New York)

.. Hinduism. As is a person's desire, so is his will; and as is his will, so is his deed (*Karma*): and whatever deeds he does, that will he reap. (*Brahadaranyaka Upanisad* 4,4,5)

*Judaism.* Be sure, your sin will find you out. (Numbers 32:23)

*Zoroastrianism.* At the beginning of life the Lord of Eternal Light didst establish proper compensations for deeds and words;

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Khurshed Dabu



Dr Ishar Singh

## SOME DELEGATES ADDRESSING THE PARLIAMENT



*Sri Hablitzel (Switzerland)*



*Sri Kumaraswamy (Dharvar, Mysore)*



*Sri Jayadayal Goenka (Gorakhpur)*



*Major-General Tadunath Singh (Ovalior)*

had compensation for the bad, and a good compensation for the good (Yasna 43:5)

**Taoism** The reward of good and evil follows as the shadow follows an object

**Jainism** Every good will bear its fruit to the door. Misery arises from wicked deeds. In this life and in the next, people cannot escape the effects of their own actions (Sacred Books of the East)

**Buddhism** By the divine vision a monk doth see creatures that have fallen and have arisen, that are low and exalted, comely and ill favoured, fortunate and unfortunate, and he doth recognize that creatures follow the destiny of their deeds (J H Moore Sayings of Buddha)

**Confucianism** Good and evil do not wroagly bafall men, but Heaven sends down misery or happiness according to one's conduct. The way of Heaven is to bless the good and

make the bad miserable (Sacred Books of the East)

**Christianity** Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. (Galatians 6:7)

**Islam** Every soul shall have recompensed for that which he has earned, and no one shall have wronged. (Koran 45:21)

**Sikhism** As man soweth, so shall he reap; human life is lost without virtue (M. A. Macauliffe Sikh Religion)

**Tenrikyo Shinto**. The souls of man vary in their fates—good fate is brought about when man's sinosity is in concord with God's; bad fate is brought about when dirt accumulates in man's mind (Tenrikyo Doctrine)

**Bahai Faith** Naught is reaped but what is sown, and naught is taken but what is laid up—save by the grace of God and His favour. Have we any good works whereby defects shall be removed or which shall bring us near unto the Lord of causes? (Bahaullah)

## Spiritual Unity: Solution to All Problems

DR M HAFIZ SYED MA PHD D Litt

In one of his discourses Dr Radhakrishnan said:

'I believe in peace because I believe in the spirit of man. The spirit of man is vastly superior to all other conditions of life. If this spirit of faith is applied to national and international affairs you will come to adopt an attitude of tolerance and understanding.'

The burning problem of the world of today which has been engaging the attention of all nations of the world is peace and how to attain it. The methods of attaining peace that they have been adopting, seem to me rather faintly because they have not tried to dive deep into the heart of the matter. The measures adopted by them have not borne desired fruits. One national complication has been leading to another complication and making things worse than before. Some of the leading nations of the world such as the USSR and the USA

have been vehemently opposing the idea of waging war against each other and pleading for international peace in their own way, and at the same time these very nations have been spending colossal amount of money over the preparation of the atomic and other kinds of destructive weapons not only for their own use but for other nations also who are dependent upon them for military aid, the basic cause being a delirious fear complex.

Statesmen and politicians have gone to the absurd length of assuming that a third world war is becoming almost inevitable. The UNO on the other hand has been veering round a big farce while pretending to solve world's conflicting problems.

In the light of these repeated failures to settle world affairs by mutual compromise and good understanding during the last quarter of a century or more, one is seriously inclined to

think that there is something wrong somewhere in the very approach to the problems of mankind which perhaps may lead one day to a certain critical point when the world might suddenly flare up into another conflagration.

The world of today is so much dominated by materialism and physical force that it hardly thinks even for a moment whether there is any such thing as spirit in man. We have been identifying ourselves completely with our physical and mental vehicles, altogether forgetting that man is not only the physical body, the five senses, thinking mind with its reasoning capacity, but he is something higher than these, the over-conscious, never-ending, cosmic entity, the essential character of which is perennial peace, homogeneous awareness and super-sensual bliss.

At present most of the people in the world identify themselves with the material self and do not consider even for a moment that they are endowed with the spiritual Self also. Those who recognise it and its rational force, the one desire of their heart has always been to be at peace with the rest the world and do nothing to injure anybody.

One who has full and abiding faith in the spirit in man will see the same Self equally dwelling in the heart of all. Humanity becomes his second nature. He would not tolerate any injury done to any other fellow human being. Seeing the same Self in all, he would unhesitatingly and unselfishly render services to all who suffer and need his help, irrespective of any consideration of political belief, religion, nationality, caste, creed or colour.

This attitude of mind leads us on to mutual understanding, respect for personal liberties, fellow-feeling, hearty co-operation and generous tolerance. If the leading nations of the world seriously reconsider their present attitude and instead of leaning on external aid and organisation they draw their inspiration from within, discern the spiritual unity of mankind which is the basis of mutual inter-dependence and international fellowship, and accept the principle of 'live and let live,'—it is just possible, they may succeed in coming to mutual agreement in settling the conflicting problems facing today's world at large. There is no reason why the two blocks of political ideologies cannot live in amity, side by side, and why colonialism cannot give place to unconditional national self governments.

Spiritual unity is the real source of moral inspiration. One who believes in his spiritual essence will never cause any injury to his fellow-being in any shape or form. He would not be moved by national greed to grab other nations' independence in the name of political ideologies. He would be loyal to the spirit of Satya in dealing with the individual as well as with the collective groups of people who are his neighbours. It is time that the civilized nations of the world should give a trial to the spiritual values of life and look at everything from the spiritual point of view. There is no harm in giving an ideal a trial. A tree is judged by its fruit. So we shall see in course of time how this scheme of spiritual unity works in settling our individual and world-problems.

(Courtesy: The Theosophical Society, Banaras.)

The human mind is always in need of a compass needle, pointing towards some ideal. Unless there is some purpose in life, the human spirit could hardly be kept progressive. Enthusiasm, interest, pep, incentive, vigour and vitality are all dependent on this compass needle of purposefulness.

## Chapter Four

### **HINDUISM**

# Hinduism

SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA

## WHAT IS HINDUISM ?

Religion comes from the Latin word 'religio,' which consists of two syllables, viz., 're' (back) and 'ligare' (to bring). That which binds back the soul with God is religion. Religion shows the way towards the attainment of God realization.

Religion satisfies the deep, inward craving in man who is not always content with leading merely an animal existence but wants spiritual consolation, solace and peace. Men cannot live by bread alone. A time comes in the life of many of us when mere worldly prosperity does not satisfy us, and we hanker after something more. In the case of many, trials and tribulations of life turn their attention to the spiritual path.

Hinduism is the religion of the Hindus. It is the oldest of all living religions. This is not founded by any particular prophet as in the case of Christianity, Buddhism and Mohammedanism. Christianity, Buddhism and Mohammedanism owe their origin to their prophets. Their dates are fixed, but no such date can be fixed for Hinduism. Hinduism is not based on a set of dogmas preached by a particular set of teachers. It is free from religious fanaticism, in truth.

## SANATANA DHARMA

Hinduism is also known by the names, 'Sanatana Dharma' and 'Vaidika Dharma'. Sanatana Dharma means eternal religion. Sanatana Dharma is so called not only because it is eternal, but also because it is protected by God and because it can make us eternal. Vaidika Dharma means the religion of the Vedas. The Vedas are the foundational scriptures of Hinduism. The ancient Rishis and sages of India have expressed their intuitive, spiritual experiences (Aparoksha

Anubhutis) in the Upanishads, which are a part of the Vedas. These experiences are direct and infallible. Hinduism regards the spiritual experiences of the Rishis of yore as its authority. The priceless truths that have been discovered by the Hindu Rishis and sages through millennia, constitute the glory of Hinduism. It is a revealed religion.

Hinduism, unlike other religions, does not dogmatically assert that the final emancipation is possible only through its means and not through any other. It only advocates some means to an end, and all means which will ultimately lead to the end are equally approved.

Hinduism allows absolute freedom to the rational mind of man. It never demands any undue restraint upon the freedom of human reason, the freedom of thought, feeling and individual will. It allows the widest freedom in matters of faith and worship. Hinduism is a religion of freedom. It allows absolute freedom in regard to questions on the nature of God, soul, creation, form of worship and the goal of life. Hinduism does not consist in the acceptance of any particular doctrine or in the observance of some particular rituals or form of worship. It does not force anybody to accept any particular dogma or method of worship. It allows everybody to reflect, investigate, enquire and cogitate. Hence all sorts of religious faiths, various forms of worship or Sadhana, diverse kinds of rituals and customs have found their conglomeration within Hinduism and are cultured and developed in tolerant relationship with one another.

## CATHOLICITY OF OUTLOOK

Hinduism does not condemn those who do not accept God as the creator and the ruler of the world, who do not accept the existence of an aeternal

Soul and the state of Moksha or Liberation Hinduism does not render the upholders of such views unfit to be recognized as pious and honourable members of the Hindu religious society.

The religious hospitality of Hinduism is proverbial. Hinduism is extremely catholic and liberal. This is the fundamental feature of Hinduism. Hinduism pays respect to all religions. It does not revile any religion. It accepts and honours truth wherever it may come from and whatever garb it may put on.

Despite all the contradictions and differences of metaphysical doctrines, modes of religious discipline and forms of ritualistic practices and social habits prevalent in the Hindu society, there is an essential uniformity in the conception of religion and outlook on life and the world among all sections of Hindus.

It accommodates all types of followers. It prescribes spiritual food for everybody according to one's qualification and growth. This is the beauty of this magnanimous religion. This is the glory of Hinduism. Hence there is no real conflict among the various cults and creeds.

The variations are an ornament to Hinduism. They are not defects. Rig Veda declares, 'Ekam sat vipra bahudha vadanti': 'Truth is one; sages call it by various names.' The Upanishads declare that all spiritual paths lead to the same goal, just as cows of variegated colours yield the same white milk. Sri Krishna says in the Gita, 'Howsoever men approach Me, even so do I welcome them; for the paths that men take from every side are Mine.' All diversities are organized and united in the body of Hinduism.

The philosophy of the Upanishads is lofty, sublime, rationally inspiring,



SWAMI SIVANANDA

#### SUB-DIVISIONS OF HINDUISM

Hinduism has within its fold various subdivisions such as Vedanta, Saivism, Saktism, Vishnuism, and so on. It has various cults and creeds. It is more a League of religions than a single religion with a definite creed. It

and unique. Western philosophers, too, have paid their tribute to the ancient seers of the Upanishads. They have been amazed at the lofty heights scaled by them. Schopenhauer studied the Upanishads and meditated on the thoughts of the Upanishads. He said, 'The

Upanishads are the solace of my life and they will be solace to me after my death also'

The Raja Yoga system of Hinduism is also splendid and unique. The lessons are immensely practical and highly instructive. No system of physical exercise can compete with Hatha Yoga. Kundalini Yoga is wonderful. Hence many Americans and Europeans seek Hindu Sannyasins and Yogis. They visit the Himalayas in quest of Yoga teachers. Some are even living under Hindu Yogis as disciples and are practising Yoga.

Further, Hinduism prescribes graded series of different Yoga Sadhana to suit the students of different tastes, temperaments and of mental capacities. Hindu teachers lay great stress on self restraint, Tapas, renunciation and practical Sadhana, beat calculated to control the mind and the senses, and to unfold the Divinity within or attain Self realization. Hinduism is not a religion of mere theories. It is eminently practical. That is the reason why India is the glorious land of Sages, Rishis, Yogis and Saints.

#### HINDU ETHICS

Hindu ethics is superb. Hinduism lays great emphasis on ethical discipline. Yama (self restraint) and Niyama (religious observance or canons) are the foundation of Yoga and Vedanta. Without ethical perfection no spiritual progress or realization is possible. A Yogic student or aspirant must be strictly ethical. He must be truthful and pure in thought, word and deed. He must possess excellent conduct. He must not injure any living being in thought, word and deed. He must practise earnestly right thought, right speech and right action.

Religion is the practical aspect of philosophy. Philosophy is the rational aspect of religion. The philosophy of Hinduism is not an armchair philosophy. It is not meant for intellectual curiosity and vain discussing. Hindu philosophy is the way of life. The philosopher of Hinduism seriously reflects, on spiritual truths, does Atma vichara,

constantly meditates and then attains Self-realization or Atma Sakshatkara. Moksha is his goal. He attempts to attain Jivanmukti, now and here.

Religion is spiritualization of human life for a Hindu. Religious culture is really the culture of freedom for him. Religion governs all the departments of Hindu life. He must realize the freedom of the soul in every department of life. Religion affords the greatest scope to him for the culture of true freedom. Religion is the only way to him for the realization of perfect freedom in life.

It is in India alone that every man knows something of philosophy. The cowherd who tends the cattle, the peasant who ploughs the fields, the hostman who pulls at his ear, sings songs replete with philosophical truths. Even the barber repeats 'Om Namaskaraya, Sivohom'. The Paramahansa Sanyasins, the itinerant monks of Hinduism, have disseminated the highest truths of Vedanta from door to door. In exchange for a handful of rice they have distributed, from door to door, the priceless gems of Hindu philosophy and religion through religious songs.

These are some of the salient features of Hinduism.

#### A PRACTICAL RELIGION

Sanatana Dharma is based on the Vedas. This is the oldest of living religions. Hinduism is aptly known by the name Vaidika Dharma. What the Vedas alone declare to be the means of attaining the summum bonum of life is Sanatana Dharma or Hindu Dharma.

Hinduism stands unrivalled in the depth and grandeur of its philosophy. Its ethical teachings are lofty, unique and sublime. It is highly flexible and adaptable to every human need. It is a perfect religion by itself. No other religion has produced so many great Yogis, saints, prophets, Acharyas, patriots, statesmen, warriors and great Pativratas as Hinduism has. The more you know of it the more you will honour and love it. The most

you study it, the more it will enlighten you and satisfy your heart

The religious history of the world tells us that from time immemorial, India has been the home of great sages, seers and Rishis. All the grand religious ideals that have moulded the characters of men, the loftiest tenets of ethics and morality that have raised human beings to a magnificent height of divine splendour, and all the sublime truths of spirituality that have made men divine and have moulded the spiritual ideas of nations and saviours of mankind—have found their home in India. It was India that gave birth to Sankaracharya, Sadguru Brahman, Ramana, Jnana Dev and Dattatreya, and to Avatars like Krishna, Rama and Buddha.

#### SPECIALITY IN HINDU CULTURE

The Hindus have a culture, civilization and religion millennia older than those of other countries. God is the one Light and Truth from whom emanate the teachings of all faiths. In Hinduism is found a brilliant expression of that Light and Truth.

England is famous for industry, America for commerce, Italy for sculptural works, but India is famous for its religious devotion, gods and saints. The goal of a religious Indian is Self-realization or attainment of God consciousness through renunciation. Minos, its Yoga, religion and its philosophical culture. Indian civilization would not have endured through so many invasions. Some Hindus are still not aware of the distinguished features of Sanatana Dharma. If every Hindu knew and understood what Hinduism was the Hindus of today would be the happiest of all people.

#### THE SCRIPTURES

The foundation of Sanatana Dharma is Sruti Smritis are the walls the Puranas and the Itihasas are the buttresses or supports. In ancient times, the Smritis were learnt by heart. The teacher sang them to his pupils and the pupils sang them after him. They were not

written in book form at first. All sects, and philosophical systems accept the Smritis as the final authority. The Smritis stand next to authority to the Smritis. Smritis are Dharmashastras. They consist of four great works written by sages, which deal with laws and regulations for the carrying on of the individual, family, social and national duties. They are Manu Smriti or Manusmastra, written by Manu, the great Hindu law-giver, Yagnavalkya Smriti, written by Sage Yagnavalkya, Shankha Smriti, Likhita Smriti, and Parasara Smriti. The most important Smriti is the Manu Smriti.

The Puranas consist of anecdotes, stories and allegories. They are meant for the masses, or the common people who are not able to study and understand the abstruse Vedas. They contain the essence of the Vedas in a simple form. They are very interesting. There are eighteen Puranas. They are written by the great sage, Veda Vyasa.

The Itihasas comprise of two great poems or epics—Ramayana and Mahabharata. Itihasas and Puranas are known as the fifth Veda. Ramayana is the life history of Sri Rama, the son of King Dasaratha. The Mahabharata is the history of two ancient families, the Kurus and the Pandavas. It contains countless object lessons, noble moral teachings and wonderful stories of ethical import. The lofty discourses of Bhishma on Dharma and the Bhagawat Gita are contained in Mahabharata.

#### GENERIC AND SPECIFIC FORMS

Every religion has a generic form or Samanyarupa and a specific form, or Visesharupa. The general form remains eternally the same. It is never changed by any circumstance, whatsoever. It is not affected at all by the ravages of time and individual differences. This aspect of religion is called Sanatana or eternal. That which changes according to the change of time, place and circumstances is the external aspect, or the ritualistic aspect of Dharma.

In Satya Yuga there was a different set of Dharmas or Laws, in Treta they changed into another form, in Dwapara the Dharmas were different from the Dharmas of the preceding Yugas, in Kali Yuga they assumed another form. Man lives in a world of change. His nature gets transformed through experiences. Hence his external form of Dharma also should change.

#### HINDU PHILOSOPHY

As already told, Philosophy is the rational aspect of religion. It is an internal and integral part of religion in India. It is a rational enquiry into the nature of Truth or Reality. It gives clear solutions for the profound, subtle problems of life. It shows the way to get rid of pain and death and attain immortality and eternal felicity.

Certain philosophical questions arise in the mind of man. What is this Samsara? Has it any purpose? Is the world real or a mere appearance? Is there any Creator or Governor of this Universe? If there is a Creator, what is His nature? What is the relation between man and the Creator? Is there any way to escape from the round of births and deaths? Is there any such thing as impersonal Absolute? If so, what is its essential nature? How to attain it? How did man come into bondage? What is his essential nature? Is he a part of the Supreme Soul? Or is he identical with it? What is the difference between Personal God and the Impersonal Absolute? What is the source for this world? What is matter? What is mind? What is individual soul? What is the goal of life? The source for a solution of these problems is philosophy. Philosophy solves beautifully all these problems.

The idea of Death has ever been the strongest motive impeller of religious and religious life. Man is afraid of death. Man does not want to die. He wants to live for ever. This is the starting point of philosophy. Philosophy enquires and investigates. It boldly proclaims, 'Do not be afraid of death. There is no immortal, cosmic Source. That is Brahman. That is

your own Atma, that dwells in the chambers of your heart. Purify your heart and meditate on this pure, immortal, changeless Self. You will attain Immortality.'

#### PURPOSE OF METAPHYSICS

A clear understanding of man's relation to God is a matter of great importance to the students of philosophy and to all spiritual aspirants. Philosophers, prophets, saviors, sages, thinkers, Acharyas and great religious leaders of the world have tried to explain the relation of man with God and the Universe. Various schools of philosophy and different kinds of religious beliefs have come into existence on account of various explanations given by different philosophers.

Metaphysics will take you to the gates of the realm of the homogeneous Consciousness, but it cannot allow you to enter that realm. Intuition or realization is necessary for entering into that holy elysium of everlasting joy and ineffable glory.

Hindu philosophy is not mere speculation or guess work. It is lofty, sublime, unique and systematic. It is based on mystic, spiritual experience or Aparokshaanubhuti. The seers, sages and Rishis who had direct, intuitive perception of the Truth are the founders of the different philosophical systems in India. The different schools of philosophy are all based on the Srutis or the Vedas.

#### SIX SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY

The six systems of Indian philosophy or the Shad darshanas are the six orthodox ways of looking at the Truth. They are Purva Mimamsa of Jaimini, Uttara Mimamsa or Vedanta by Vyasa, Sankhya by Kapila Muni, Yoga by Patanjali, Vaishesika by Kanada; and Nyaya or logic by Gautama. Purva Mimamsa treats of Karma Kanda, Sankhya deals with the study of Prakriti and Purusha. Yoga deals with the control of the Vrittis or thought waves, Manas or mind and spiritual contemplation. Nyaya is considered as a prerequisite for all philosophical enquiry.

There orthodox systems of philosophy believe in the authority of the Vedas. The heterodox systems of philosophy do not believe in the authority of the Vedas. The six heterodox systems of philosophy are—

1. Materialism of Charvaka,
2. Nihilism of the Madhyamikas,
3. Idealism of Yogachara,
4. Presentationism by Sautrantika,
5. Representationism by Vaibheshikas and
6. The Jaina system of philosophy.

Except the first and the sixth the rest of the heterodox systems of philosophy is Buddhistic.

The Sutras or aphorisms of Vyasa are the basis of the Vedanta philosophy. These Sutras have been variously explained by different commentators. From their interpretations have arisen three important systems of philosophy, viz., Dwaita, Visishtadwaita and Adwaita. The Vedanta Schools base their doctrines on the Upanishads.

The Upanishads, the Vedanta Sutras and the Bhagavat Gita are regarded as the most authoritative scriptures of Hinduism. They are called Prasthanatraya Granthas. Each system of philosophy treats of three main problems, viz., God, the World and the Soul.

There are several other schools of philosophy, viz., Kevala Adwaita philosophy of Sankaracharya, the philosophy of Qualified Monism or Visishtadwaita of Ramanujacharya; the Dwaita philosophy of Madhvacharya, the Bheda abheda philosophy of Nimbarkacharya, the Pure Monistic philosophy of Vallabhacharya; the Achintya Bhedabhedha philosophy of Chaitanya, and the Saiva Siddhanta philosophy of Kander. The several schools of philosophy are only different attempts at discovering the same Truth.

#### THREE STAGES OF EVOLUTION

The three main schools of metaphysical thoughts are dualism (Dwaita), qualified monism (Visishtadwaita) and pure monism (Adwaita). They are different rungs in the

ladder of Yoga. They are not at all contradictory. On the contrary, they are complimentary to one another. These stages are harmoniously arranged in a graded series of spiritual experiences. Dualism, qualified monism, pure monism—all these culminate eventually in the Adwaita Vedanta realization of the Absolute, or the transcendental, Trigunatita, Ananta Brahman.

Madhva said, 'Man is the servant of God' and established his Dwaita philosophy. Ramanuja said, 'Man is a ray or a spark of God' and established his Visishtadwaita philosophy. Sankara said, 'Man is identical with Brahman or the eternal Soul' and established his Kevala Adwaita philosophy. People have different temperaments and different capacities of understanding. So different schools of philosophy are necessary. The highest is Adwaita philosophy. A dualist or a qualified monist eventually becomes a Kevala Adwaitin.

A Jnani merges himself in Brahman. He wishes to become identical with Brahman. A Visishtadwaitian wants to become like the image of Narayana and enjoy the divine consciousness. He does not wish to merge himself or become identical with the Lord. He wishes to remain as a spark. The Dwaitavadin wants to serve the Lord as a servant, and spends his life in the worship of the Lord.

#### THE VEDAS

The Vedas are the fountain-head of Hindu religion. The Vedas are the ultimate source to which all the religious knowledge of the Hindus can be traced. The Hindus have received their religion through 'revelation,' the Vedas. The Vedas embody eternal, spiritual truths. They are an embodiment of divine knowledge, which cannot be destroyed. Knowledge is eternal. In that sense the Vedas are eternal.

The Rishis of yore disseminated the knowledge of the Vedas. The Vedio Rishis were

great realized sages who had direct intuitive perception of Brahman or the Absolute. They were inspired writers. They built a simple, grand and perfect system of religion and philosophy from which the founders and teachers of many other religions have drawn their inspiration.

The Vedas are the oldest books in the library of man. Religion is of divine origin. It is revealed through intuition. It is embodied in the Vedas.

The term 'Veda' comes from the root 'Vid' which means 'to know'. Hence 'Veda' means knowledge. When it is applied to scripture, it signifies a Book of Knowledge. The Vedas are the foundational scriptures of the Hinduism.

The Vedas have been handed down to us by a number of ancient Rishis. The word 'Rishi' means a seer, (from Drsi—to see). He is the Mantra Drashta, a seer of Mantra or thought. The thought was not his own. The Rishis saw the truths or heard them, as it were. Therefore, the Vedas are what have been heard (Sruti). The Rishi did not create them out of his mind. He was the seer of thought which existed already. He was only the spiritual discoverer of the thought. He was not the inventor of the Vedas.

The Rishi is only a medium or an agent to transmit to people, the intuitional experiences which he receives. Hence the truths of the Vedas are called revelations. All the other religions of the world claim their authority as being delivered by special messengers of God to certain persons, but the Vedas do not owe their authority to anyone. They are themselves the authority as almost none of their authors cared to put down their names to different compositions.

Sruti literally means what is heard and Smriti means what is remembered. Sruti is revelation, Smriti is tradition. Sruti is direct experience. Great Rishis recorded their intuitive, religious experiences for the benefit

of posterity. These records constitute the Vedas. Hence, Sruti is the primary authority. Smriti is a recollection of these experiences by the later generations. Hence it is the secondary authority.

The Vedas are four, the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda and the Atharva Veda. Each Veda consists of four parts, the Mantras or hymns, the Brahmanas or explanations of the Mantras, the Aranyakas, and the Upanishads.

### THE UPANISHADS

The Upanishads contain the essence or the philosophical portion of the Vedas. The philosophy of the Upanishads is sublime, profound, lofty and soul stirring. The Upanishads are the concluding portions of the Vedas or the end of the Vedas. The teaching based on them is, therefore, called Vedanta. They form the Jnana Kanda. They are the most important portion of the Vedas. They form the very foundation of Hinduism. They speak of the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul. They reveal most subtle and deep spiritual truths.

The different philosophers of India belonging to different schools such as qualified monism, dualism, pure monism, and so on, have acknowledged the supreme authority of the Upanishads. They have given their own interpretations to them. They have built their philosophy on the foundation of the Upanishads.

The most important Upanishads are Isa, Kena, Katha, Praena, Mundaka, Mandukya, Aitareya, Taittiriya, Chhandogya, Brihad Aranyaka and Swetashvatara. These are supremely authoritative.

The subject matter of the Vedas is divided into (1) Karma Kanda or ritualistic section, it deals with various sacrifices and rituals; (2) Upasana Kanda or worship section, it deals with the various kinds of worship or meditation, and (3) Jnana-Kanda or knowledge section, it deals with the highest knowledge of Nirguna



*Sardar Bahadur Balwant Singh Puri, Secretary General of the Indian Red Cross Society, speaking at the inaugural session of the Parliament of Religions (vide page 59).*

Brahman. The Mantras and the Brahmanas constitute the Karma-Kanda; the Aranyaka, the Upasana-Kanda; and the Upanishads the Jnana-Kanda.

#### LAW OF KARMA

Karma means not only action, but also the result of an action. The consequence of an action is really not a separate thing. It is a part of the action and cannot be parted from it. Any deed, or any thought that causes an effect is called a Karma. The law of Karma means the law of causation. Wherever there is cause, an effect must be produced thereto. A seed is a cause for the tree, the latter being an effect of the former. The tree produces seeds and becomes the cause for the seeds.

The law of Karma is one of the fundamental doctrines of not only Hinduism, but also of Buddhism and Jainism. As a man sows, so shall he reap. This is the law of Karma. If you do an evil action, you must suffer for it. If you do a good action, you must get happiness. There is no power on this earth which can stop the actions from yielding their fruits. Every thought, every word, every deed is weighed in the scales of eternal, divine

justice. The Law of Karma is inexorable.

Things do not happen in this universe by accident or chance in a disorderly manner. They happen in regular succession. They follow each other in a regular order. There is a certain definite connection between what is being done now by some one and what will happen in the future to the performer of that action.

You are the master of your own fate. You are the architect of your own fortune. You are responsible for what you suffer. You are responsible for your present state. If you are unhappy, it has been your own making. If you are miserable, it has been your own making. Every action bears a fruit, sooner or later. A virtuous action produces pleasure as its effect. An evil deed causes pain.

Desires produce Karmas. You work and exert to acquire the objects of your desire. Karma produces its fruits as pain and pleasure. You will have to take births after births to reap the fruits of your Karmas. This is the law of Karma.

Man is threefold in his nature. He consists of Ichha (desire, feeling), Jnana (knowing) and Kriya (willing). These three fashion his Karma. He knows objects like chair, tree, etc. He feels joy and sorrow. He wills to do this or not to do that.

#### THE CHAIN-REACTION

If you put a seed in the earth, it sends up a little stem. Then leaves come out of the stem.

Then come flowers and fruits. There are seeds again in the fruits. Mango seed only produces mango tree. If you sow rice, you cannot expect a crop of wheat. The same sort of seed produces the same kind of plant. A human being is only born from the womb of a woman, a horse from a horse, a dog from a dog. Similarly, if you sow the seed of an evil action, you will reap a harvest of pain and suffering. If you sow the seed of a virtuous action, you will reap a harvest of pleasure. This is the law of Karma.

Whatever you sow by your actions comes back to you. If you make others happy through service, charity and kind act, you sow the seed of happiness. If you make others unhappy through your harsh words, insult, ill treatment, cruel actions, oppression, etc., you sow unhappiness and bear the fruit of pain, suffering and misery. This is the immutable law of Karma.

Your actions of the past are responsible for your present condition. Your present actions will shape or mould your future. There is nothing chaotic or capricious in this world. You become good by your good actions and bad by your evil actions.

You sow an action and reap a habit. You sow a habit and reap a character. You sow a character and reap your destiny. Hence, destiny is your own making. You can undo it by entertaining noble thoughts, and doing virtuous actions and changing your mode of thinking. Think that you are the all pervading immortal Brahman. Brahman you will become. This is an immutable law.

### THREE KINDS OF KARMA

Karma is of three kinds, viz., Sanchita (accumulated works), Prarabdha (fructifying works), and Kriyamana or Agami (current works). Sanchita Karma means accumulated actions of the past. Part of them is seen in the character of man, in his tendencies, aptitudes, capacities, inclinations and desires. Tendencies arise from these. Prarabdha is that portion of the past Karma which is responsible for the

present life. The portion of Sanchita Karma, which influences human life in the present incarnation, is called Prarabdha. It is ripe for reaping. It cannot be avoided or changed. It is only exhausted by being experienced. You pay your past debts. Prarabdha Karma is that which has begun to or is actually bearing fruit. It is selected out of the mass of the Sanchita Karma. Kriyamana is that Karma which is now being made for the future. It is also called Agami Karma.

In Vedantic literature there is a beautiful analogy. The Bowman has already shot an arrow, it has left his hands. He cannot recall it. He is about to shoot another arrow. The bundle of arrows in the quiver on his back is Sanchita, the arrow that has been shot is Prarabdha and the arrow which he is about to shoot from his bow is Agami. Of these he has perfect control over the Sanchita and Agami Karmas but he must surely work out his Prarabdha. The past actions which have begun to take effect he has to experience.

There is another beautiful analogy. The granary represents the Sanchita Karma; the portion taken from the granary and sold to the merchants for retail sale corresponds to Prarabdha, that which is sold daily represents Agami.

The wind in the lot of Sanchita Karma is destroyed by attaining knowledge of Brahman or the Eternal. It can be greatly modified by entertaining lofty, divine thoughts and doing virtuous actions. Agami Karma can be destroyed by expiatory rites or Prayaschitta and by removing the idea of agency through Nimitta Bhav (the attitude of being an instrument in the hands of God) or Sakshi Bhav (the attitude of a silent witness of the actions of the senses and the mind).

Selfish Karma leads you to rebirth and that rebirth generates new Karma while working off the old. Get rid of Karma if you wish to get rid of the miseries of rebirths. Selfless work will not bind you. They will purify your heart and lead to the descent of

the divine light and grace. Understand the law of Karma and the law of cause and effect. Think rightly. Act nobly. Meditate regularly, and attain eternal bliss and immortality.

### DOCTRINE OF REBIRTH

The doctrine of reincarnation or transmigration of souls is a fundamental tenet of Hinduism. You will not cease to exist after death. Before this birth you have passed through countless lives. Sri Krishna says in Gita: Both you and I have had many births before this only I know them all, while you do not. Birth is inevitably followed by death and death by rebirth. As a man, casting off worn out garments, taketh new ones so the dweller in the body, casting off worn out bodies entereth into others that are new.

The word 'reincarnation' literally means coming again into a physical body. The individual soul takes again a mortal vehicle. The word 'transmigration' means passing from one plane to another—passing into a new body.

The Upanishads also declare: 'Just as a caterpillar which has come to the top of a blade of grass draws itself over a new blade so also does the soul draw itself over to a new body after it has put aside its old body' (*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*). Just as a goldsmith having taken a piece of gold, makes another form new and more beautiful so, also verily the Atma having cast off this body and having put away Avidya or ignorance assumes another new and more beautiful form' (*Brihad Upanishad*). Like corn does a mortal ripe like corn again does he spring to life' (*Kathopanishad*).

The doctrine of rebirth is a corollary to the law of Karma. The differences of disposition that are found between one individual and another must be due to one's respective past actions. Past action implies past birth. Further, all your Karmas cannot certainly bear fruit in this birth alone. Therefore, there must be another birth for enjoying the remaining actions. Each soul has a series of births and deaths. Births and deaths will continue

till you attain knowledge of the Self.

You do not come into the world in total forgetfulness and in utter darkness. You are born with certain memories and habits acquired in the previous births. Desires take their origin from previous experiences. We find that none is born without desire. Every being is born with some desires which are associated with the things enjoyed by him in the past life. The desire proves the existence of his soul in the previous lives.

Good Karmas lead to the incarnation into higher spheres, bad karmas into lower. By virtue is obtained ascent to higher places, by vice, descent to the lower, from wisdom realms, heedlessness and bondage from the reverse. So long as Karmas, whether good or bad are exhausted men do not attain Moksha or the final emancipation even in hundreds of Kalpas. Both good and bad Karmas bind tight the Jivas in their chains. One is of gold of gold the other is of iron. Moksha cannot be attained by men so long as knowledge of the Eternal is not attained.

Men contains within himself infinite possibilities. The magazine of power and wisdom is within him. He has to unfold the Divinity within. This is the object of living and dying.

### HINDU ETHICS

Morality or ethics is the science of conduct. Ethics is the study of what is right or good to conduct. Ethical science shows the way in which human beings should behave towards each other as well as towards other creations. It contains systematical principles on which men should act. Ethics is right conduct or Sadachara. Without ethics you cannot have progress in the spiritual path. Ethics is the foundation of Yoga. Ethics is the corner stone of Vedanta. Ethics is the strong pillar on which the edifice of Bhakti Yoga rests. Ethics is the gateway to God realization.

Every religion has its ethics. In Hinduism Yama and Niyama of Patanjali Maharsi constitute ethics. Mann Smriti, Yegavalkya

Smriti and Parasara Smriti contain the code of conduct for man. The three kinds of austerity of Gita are nothing but the practice of ethics.

All cannot decide everything for themselves. Hence, rules of conduct have been laid down by the rishis and seers from generation to generation.

Ethics is a relative science. What is good for one may not be good for another. What is good at one time and at one place may not be good at another time and at another place. Ethics is relative to man himself and to his surroundings.

Good conduct is the root of material and spiritual prosperity. It is good conduct which prolongs and fosters harmonious relationship and brings peace and happiness. It is good conduct that generates virtues. Therefore, the development of good conduct is of paramount importance. Ethical culture is the very pivot of spirituality.

Metaphysics rests on morality. Morality has Vedanta as its basis. The Upnishad says 'Thy neighbour is in truth thy very self and what separates you from him is mere illusion'. Good conduct is the highest Dharma. It is the root of all Tapas, Righteousness, truth, good works, power and prosperity—all originate from right conduct. All that which is free from any motive of injury to any being is surely desirable. Moral precepts have been codified for social amity and individual self-culture.

Do not leave the path of morality. Do not leave righteousness for the sake of some material gain. Build up character. Do not do any act which does not bring good to others or that act, which you will feel ashamed of. This is a brief description of what right conduct should be.

#### VARNASHRAMA DHARMA

The aim of Varnashrama Dharma is to promote the development of the universal, eternal Dharma. If you defend Dharma, it will defend you, if you destroy it, it will

destroy you. Therefore never destroy Dharma. This principle holds true of the individual as much as the nation. It is Dharma alone which keeps a nation alive. Dharma is the very soul of men. Dharma is the very soul of a nation.

The rules of Dharma have been laid down for regulating the worldly affairs of men. Dharma brings as its consequence happiness both in this world and in the next. Dharma is the means of preserving one's self. Dharma is the first and foremost Purusharthas.

The duties of the castes are Varnadharma. The four principal castes of the Hindus are Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras. The four Ashramas are Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha and Sanyasa. The principle of Varnashrama Dharma is one of the fundamental principles of Hinduism.

Sri Krishna says in Gita, 'The four castes were emanated by Me by the different distribution of qualities and actions. Know Me to be the author of them, though I am actionless and inexhaustible' (Chap. IV 13).

Human society is like a huge machine. The individuals and communities are like its parts. If the parts are weak and broken, the machine will not work. A machine is useless without its parts. The human body also can work efficiently if its organs are in sound and strong condition. If there is pain in any part of the body, if there is disease in any organ of the body, the human machine will go out of order. It will not perform its usual functions. So is the case with the human society. Every individual should perform his duties efficiently. The underlying principle in the caste system or Varnadharma is division of labour. The Hindu Rishis formed an ideal scheme of society and an ideal way of individual life, which is known by the name, Varnashrama Dharma.

Some Western philosophers have made a social division in three classes, viz., philosophers, warriors and masses (commoners). Philosophers correspond to the Brahmins,

warriors to the Kshatriyas and the masses to the Vaishyas and the Sudras. This system is indispensable to keep the society in a state of perfect harmony and order.

This division is according to the Guna and Karma of the individual. Each class contributes its best to the commonweal or solidarity of the nation. There is no question of higher and lower division.

There are three qualities or Gunas, viz., Sattva (purity), Rajas (extrovert tendency) and Tamas (inertia). These three qualities are found in man in varying proportions. Sattva preponderates in some persons. These are Brahmanas. They are wise persons or thinkers. They are the priests, and the philosophers who guide rulers. In some Rajas is predominant. These are Kshatriyas. They are warriors and the ruling class. In some Tamas is predominant. They are Vaishyas or traders. They are, it is said, spiritually inert, in a way. They do business and agriculture and amass wealth. Sudras are the servants. None of these qualities are highly developed in them. They serve the other three castes. Guna (quality) and Karma (kind of work) determine the caste of a man. This is supported by Sri Krishna in Gita also.

Serenity, self-restraint, austerity, purity, forgiveness, aprigraha, knowledge, realization and behav in God are the duties of the Brahmanas, born of (their own) nature. Prowess, splendour, firmness, dexterity, fearlessness, generosity and lordliness are the qualities of the Kshatriyas, born of (their own) nature. Agriculture, cattle rearing and commerce are the duties of the Vaishyas, born of (their own) nature, and action consisting of menial service is the duty of the Sudras, born of (their own) nature.

Varnashrama Dharma is a characteristic feature of Hinduism. It is temperamentally prevalent throughout the whole world according to Ganakarma, though there is no distinct denominationalization of this kind. Varna does not

really mean the colour of the skin, but the colour of one's character or quality.

Peace and order will prevail in society only when all people do their respective duties efficiently.

The caste system has degenerated into Adharma during the past centuries. The upper classes gradually neglected their duties. The test of ability and character slowly vanished. Birth became the chief consideration in determining castes. All castes fell from their ideals and forgot all about their duties. Brahmins became selfish and claimed superiority over others by mere birth without possessing due qualifications. The Kshatriyas lost their nobility and spirit of sacrifice. The Vaishyas became very greedy. They did not earn wealth by honest means. They did not look after the economic welfare of the people. They who lost the spirit of sacrifice. Sudras gave up service. The masses revolted against the modified form of slavery, and most naturally consequent ill treatment by the so called upper classes.

A Brahmin is no Brahmin if he is not endowed with purity and good character and if he leads a life of dissipation and immorality. A Sudra is a Brahmin if he leads a virtuous and pious life. Caste is a question of character. Conduct and character count and not heredity alone. If one is Brahmin by birth and at the same time if he possesses the virtues of the Brahmin, it is extremely good because the virtuous qualifications alone determine the birth of a Brahmin.

Untouchability is certainly a serious blot on Hinduism. This is the work of priests or Purushas on account of arrogant assumption of superiority. It is a heinous crime against humanity. There is no religious sanction for keeping any one as an outcaste. This stain should have to be removed from Hinduism if it is to be recognized as a glorious religion.

#### ASHRAMA DHARMA

There are four Ashramas or stages in life, viz., Brahmacharya or the period of scholastic

In Satya Yuga there was a different set of Dharmas or Laws, in Treta they changed into another form, in Dwapara the Dharmas were different from the Dharmas of the preceding Yugas, in Kali Yuga they assumed another form. Man lives in a world of change. His nature gets transformed through experiences. Hence his external form of Dharma also should change.

### HINDU PHILOSOPHY

As already told, Philosophy is the rational aspect of religion. It is an integral part of religion in India. It is a rational enquiry into the nature of Truth or Reality. It gives clear solutions for the profound, subtle problems of life. It shows the way to get rid of pain and death and attain immortality and eternal felicity.

Certain philosophical questions arise in the mind of man. What is this Samsara? Has it any purpose? Is the world real or a mere appearance? Is there any Creator or Governor of this Universe? If there is a Creator, what is His nature? What is the relation between man and the Creator? Is there any way to escape from the round of births and deaths? Is there any such thing as impersonal Absolute? If so, what is its essential nature? How to attain it? How did man come into bondage? What is his essential nature? Is he a part of the Supreme Soul? Or is he identical with it? What is the difference between Personal God and the Impersonal Absolute? What is the source for this world? What is matter? What is mind? What is individual soul? What is the goal of life? The source for a solution of these problems is philosophy. Philosophy solves beautifully all these problems.

The idea of Death has ever been the strongest motive impeller of religious and religious life. Man is afraid of death. Man does not want to die. He wants to live for ever. This is the starting point of philosophy. Philosophy enquires and investigates. It boldly proclaims, 'Do not be afraid of death. There is an immortal, cosmic Source. That is Brahman. That is

your own Atma, that dwells in the chambers of your heart. Purify your heart and meditate on this pure, immortal, changeless Self. You will attain Immortality.'

### PURPOSE OF METAPHYSICS

A clear understanding of man's relation to God is a matter of great importance to the students of philosophy and to all spiritual aspirants. Philosophers, prophets, saints, sages, thinkers, Acaryas and great religious leaders of the world have tried to explain the relation of man with God and the Universe. Various schools of philosophy and different kinds of religious beliefs have come into existence on account of various explanations given by different philosophers.

Metaphysics will take you to the gates of the realm of the homogeneous Consciousness, but it cannot allow you to enter that realm. Intuition or realization is necessary for entering into that holy abode of everlasting joy and ineffable glory.

Hindu philosophy is not mere speculation or guess work. It is lofty, sublime, unique and systematic. It is based on mystic, spiritual experience or Aparoksha-anubhuti. The seers, sages and Rishis who had direct, intuitive perception of the Truth are the founders of the different philosophical systems in India. The different schools of philosophy are all based on the Sutras or the Vedas.

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The Upanishads, the Vedanta Sutras and the Bhagavat Gita are regarded as the most authoritative scriptures of Hinduism. They are called Prasthanatraya Granthis. Each system of philosophy treats of three main problems, viz., God, the World and the Soul.

There are several other schools of philosophy, viz., Kevala Adwaita philosophy of Sankaracharya, the philosophy of Qualified Monism or Visishtadwaita of Ramanujacharya; the Dwaita philosophy of Madhvacharya, the Bheda abheda philosophy of Nimbarkacharya, the Pure Monistic philosophy of Vallabhacharya; the Achintya Bheda abheda philosophy of Chaitanya, and the Saiva Siddhanta philosophy of Kandar. The several schools of philosophy are only different attempts at discovering the same Truth.

#### THREE STAGES OF EVOLUTION

The three main schools of metaphysical thoughts are dualism (Dwaita), qualified monism (Visishtadwaita) and pure monism (Adwaita). They are different rungs in the

ladder of Yogs. They are not at all contradictory. On the contrary, they are complimentary to one another. These stages are harmoniously arranged in a graded series of spiritual experiences. Dualism, qualified monism, pure monism—all these culminate eventually in the Advaita Vedanta realization of the Absolute, or the transcendental, Trigunatita, Ananta Brahman.

Madhva said, 'Man is the servant of God' and established his Dwaita philosophy. Ramanuja said, 'God is a ray or a spark of God' and established his Visishtadwaita philosophy. Sankara said 'Man is identical with Brahman or the eternal Son' and established his Kevala Advaita philosophy. People have different temperaments and different capacities of understanding. So different schools of philosophy are necessary. The highest is Advaita philosophy. A dualist or a qualified monist eventually becomes a Kevala Advaitin.

A Jnani merges himself in Brahman. He wishes to become identical with Brahman. A Visishtadwaitin wants to become like the image of Nirvana and enjoy the divine consciousness. He does not wish to merge himself or become identical with the Lord. He wishes to remain as a spark. The Dwaitavadin wants to serve the Lord as a servant, and spends his life in the worship of the Lord.

#### THE VEDAS

The Vedas are the fountain head of Hindu religion. The Vedas are the ultimate source to which all the religious knowledge of the Hindus can be traced. The Hindus have received their religion through 'revelation,' the Vedas. The Vedas embody eternal, spiritual truths. They are an embodiment of divine knowledge, which cannot be destroyed. Knowledge is eternal. In that sense the Vedas are eternal.

The Rishis of yore disseminated the knowledge of the Vedas. The Vedic Rishis were

great realized sages who had direct intuitive perception of Brahman or the Absolute. They were inspired writers. They built a simple, grand and perfect system of religion and philosophy from which the founders and teachers of many other religions have drawn their inspiration.

The Vedas are the oldest books in the library of man. Religion is of divine origin. It is revealed through intuition. It is embodied in the Vedas.

The term 'Veda' comes from the root 'Vid' which means to know. Hence 'Veda' means knowledge. When it is applied to scripture, it signifies a Book of Knowledge. The Vedas are the foundational scriptures of the Hinduism.

The Vedas have been handed down to us by a number of ancient Rishis. The word 'Rishi' means a seer, (from Dris—to see). He is the Maatra Drashti, a seer of Mantra or thought. The thought was not his own. The Rishi saw the truths or heard them, as it were. Therefore, the Vedas are what have been heard (Sruti). The Rishi did not create them out of his mind. He was the seer of thought which existed already. He was only the spiritual discoverer of the thought. He was not the inventor of the Vedas.

The Rishi is only a medium or an agent to transmit to people, the intuitional experiences which he receives. Hence the truths of the Vedas are called revelations. All the other religions of the world claim their authority as being delivered by special messengers of God to certain persons, but the Vedas do not owe their authority to anyone. They are themselves the authority as almost none of their authors cared to put down their names in different compositions.

Sruti literally means what is heard and Smriti means what is remembered. Sruti is revelation, Smriti is tradition. Sruti is direct experience. Great Rishis recorded their intuitive, religious experiences for the benefit

of posterity. These records constitute the Vedas. Hence, Sruti is the primary authority. Smriti is a recollection of these experiences by the later generations. Hence it is the secondary authority.

The Vedas are four—the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda and the Atharva Veda. Each Veda consists of four parts, the Mantras or hymns, the Brahmanas or explanations of the Mantras, the Aranyakas, and the Upanishads.

### THE UPANISHADS

The Upanishads contain the essence or the philosophical portion of the Vedas. The philosophy of the Upanishads is sublime, profound, lofty and soul-stirring. The Upanishads are the concluding portions of the Vedas or the end of the Vedas. The teaching based on them is, therefore, called Vedanta. They form the Jnana Kanda. They are the most important portion of the Vedas. They form the very foundation of Hinduism. They speak of the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul. They reveal most subtle and deep spiritual truths.

The different philosophers of India belong to different schools such as qualified monism, dualism, pure monism, and so on, have acknowledged the supreme authority of the Upanishads. They have given their own interpretations to them. They have built their philosophy on the foundation of the Upanishads.

The most important Upanishads are Isa, Kena, Katha, Praena, Mandukya, Aitareya, Taittiriya, Chhandogya, Brihadaranyaka and Swetasvatara. These are supremely authoritative.

The subject-matter of the Vedas is divided into (1) Karma-Kanda or ritualistic section, it deals with various sacrifices and rituals; (2) Upasana-Kanda or worship section, it deals with the various kinds of worship or meditation, and (3) Jnana-Kanda or knowledge section, it deals with the highest knowledge of Nirguna



Sardar Bahadur Bal-want Singh Puri, Secretary General of the Indian Red Cross Society, speaking at the inaugural session of the Parliament of Religions (vide page 53)

justice. The Law of Karma is inexorable.

Things do not happen in this universe by accident or chance in a disorderly manner. They happen in regular succession. They follow each other in a regular order. There is a certain definite connection between what is being done now by some one and what will happen in the future to the performer of that action.

You are the master of your own fate. You are the architect of your own fortune. You are responsible for what you suffer. You are responsible for your present state. If you are unhappy, it has been your own making. If you are miserable, it has been your own making. Every action bears a fruit sooner or later. A virtuous action produces pleasure as its effect. An evil deed causes pain.

Desires produce Karma. You work and exert to secure the objects of your desire. Karma produces its fruits as pain and pleasure. You will have to take birth after birth to reap the fruits of your Karmas. This is the law of Karma.

Man is threefold in his nature. He consists of Ichha (desire feeling), Jnaana (knowing) and Kriya (willing). These three fashion his Karma. He knows objects like chair, tree, etc. He feels joy and sorrow. He wills to do this or not to do that.

#### THE CHAIN-REACTION

If you put a seed in the earth, it sends up a little stem. Then leaves come out of the stem.

Brahman. The Mantras and the Brahmanas constitute the Karma Kanda, the Aranyakas, the Upasana Kanda, and the Upanishads the Jnana Kanda.

#### LAW OF KARMA

Karma means not only action but also the result of an action. The consequence of an action is really not a separate thing. It is a part of the action and cannot be parted from it. Any deed or any thought that causes an effect is called a Karma. The law of Karma means the law of causation. Wherever there is cause an effect must be produced thereto. A seed is a cause for the tree, the latter being an effect of the former. The tree produces seeds and becomes the cause for the seeds.

The law of Karma is one of the fundamental doctrines of not only Hinduism, but also of Buddhism and Jainism. As a man sows, so shall he reap. This is the law of Karma. If you do an evil action, you must suffer for it. If you do a good action, you must get happiness. There is no power on this earth which can stop the actions from yielding their fruits. Every thought, every word, every deed is weighed in the scales of eternal, divine

Then come flowers and fruits. There are seeds again in the fruits. Mango seed only produces mango tree. If you sow rice you cannot expect a crop of wheat. The same sort of seed produces the same kind of plant. A human being is only born from the womb of a woman, a horse from a horse, a dog from a dog. Similarly if you sow the seed of an evil action, you will reap a harvest of pain and suffering. If you sow the seed of a virtuous action, you will reap a harvest of pleasure. This is the law of Karma.

Whatever you sow by your actions comes back to you. If you make others happy through service, charity and kind act, you sow the seed of happiness. If you make others unhappy through your harsh words, insult, ill treatment, cruel actions, oppression etc. you sow unhappiness and bear the fruit of pain, suffering and misery. This is the immutable law of Karma.

Your actions of the past are responsible for your present condition. Your present actions will shape or mould your future. There is nothing chaotic or capricious in this world. You become good by your good actions and bad by your evil actions.

You sow an action and reap a habit. You sow a habit and reap a character. You sow a character and reap your destiny. Hence, destiny is your own making. You can undo it by entertaining nob's thoughts and doing virtuous actions and changing your mode of thinking. Think that you are the all pervading immortal Brahman. Brahman, you will become. This is an immutable law.

### THREE KINDS OF KARMA

Karma is of three kinds, viz., Sanchita (accumulated works), Prarabdha (magnetizing works) and Kriyamana or Agami (current works). Sanchita Karma means accumulated actions of the past. Part of them is seen in the character of man, in his tendencies, aptitudes, capacities, inclinations and desires. Tendencies arise from these. Prarabdha is that portion of the past Karma which is responsible for the

present life. The portion of Sanchita Karma which influences human life in the present incarnation, is called Prarabdha. It is ripe for reaping. It cannot be avoided or changed. It is only exhausted by being experienced. You pay your past debts. Prarabdha Karma is that which has begun to or is actually bearing fruit. It is selected out of the mass of the Sanchita Karma. Kriyamana is that Karma which is now being made for the future. It is also called Agami Karma.

In Vedantic literature there is a beautiful analogy. The bowman has already shot an arrow, it has left his hands. He cannot recall it. He is about to shoot another arrow. The bundle of arrows on the quiver on his back is Sanchita, the arrow that has been shot is Prarabdha and the arrow which he is about to shoot from his bow is Agami. Of these he has perfect control over the Sanchita and Agami Karmas but he must surely work out his Prarabdhas. The past actions which have begun to take effect he has to experience.

There is another beautiful analogy. The granary represents the Sanchita Karma, the portion taken from the granary and sold to the merchants for retail sale corresponds to Prarabdha, that which is sold daily represents Agami.

The whole lot of Sanchita Karma is destroyed by attaining knowledge of Brahman or the Eternal. It can be greatly modified by entertaining lofty divine thoughts and doing virtuous actions. Agami Karma can be destroyed by expiatory rites or Prayaschitta and by removing the idea of agency through Numita Bhav (the attitude of being an instrument in the hands of God) or Sakshi Bhav (the attitude of a silent witness of the actions of the senses and the mind).

Selfish Karma leads you to rebirth and that rebirth generates new Karma while working off the old. Get rid of Karma if you wish to get rid of the miseries of rebirths. Selfless work will not bind you. They will purify your heart and lead to the descent of

the divine light and grace. Understand the law of Karma and the law of cause and effect. Think rightly. Act nobly. Meditate regularly, and attain eternal bliss and immortality.

### DOCTRINE OF REBIRTH

The doctrine of reincarnation or transmigration of souls is a fundamental tenet of Hinduism. You will not cease to exist after death. Before this birth you have passed through countless lives. Sri Krishna says in Gita : 'Both you and I have had many births before this, only I know them all, while you do not. Birth is inevitably followed by death and death by rebirth. As a man, casting off worn out garments, taketh new ones, so the dweller in the body, casting off worn out bodies, entereth into others that are new.'

The word 'reincarnation' literally means coming again into a physical body. The individual soul takes again a mortal vehicle. The word 'transmigration' means passing from one plane to another—passing into a new body.

The Upanishads also declare, 'Just as a caterpillar which has come to the top of a blade of grass, draws itself over a new blade, so also does the soul draw itself over to a new body after it has put aside its old body' (*Brihadaranyaka Upa.*) 'Just as a goldsmith, having taken a piece of gold, makes another form, new and more beautiful, so also verily the Atma, having cast off this body and having put away Avidya or ignorance, assumes another new and more beautiful form' (*Brihad Upa.*) Like corn does a mortal ripe, like corn again does he spring to life' (*Kathopanishad*)

The doctrine of rebirth is a corollary to the law of Karma. The differences of disposition that are found between one individual and another must be due to one's respective past actions. Past actions impinge past birth. Further, all your Karmas cannot certainly bear fruit to this birth alone. Therefore, there must be another birth for enjoying the remaining actions. Each soul has a series of births and deaths. Births and deaths will continue

till you attain knowledge of the Self.

You do not come into the world in total forgetfulness and in utter darkness. You are born with certain memories and habits acquired in the previous births. Desires take their origin from previous experiences. We find that none is born without desires. Every being is born with some desires, which are associated with the things enjoyed by him in the past life. The desire proves the existence of his soul in the previous lives.

Good Karmas lead to the incarnation into higher spheres, bad Karmas into lower. By virtue is obtained an ascent to higher places, by vice, descent to the lower, from wisdom results beatitude, and bondage from the reverse. So long as Karmas, whether good or bad, are exhausted men do not attain Moksha or the final emancipation even in hundreds of Kalpas. Both good and bad Karmas bind tight the Jiva in their chains. One is a chain of gold, the other is of iron. Moksha cannot be attained by man so long as knowledge of the Eternal is not attained.

Man contains within himself infinite possibilities. The magazine of power and wisdom is within him. He has to unfold the Divinity within. This is the object of living and dying.

### HINDU ETHICS

Morality or ethics is the science of conduct. Ethics is the study of what is right or good to conduct. Ethical science shows the way in which human beings should behave towards each other as well as towards other creations. It contains systematical principles on which man should act. Ethics is right conduct or Sadschara. Without ethics you cannot have progress in the spiritual path. Ethics is the foundation of Yoga. Ethics is the corner stone of Vedanta. Ethics is the strong pillar on which the edifice of Bhakti Yoga rests. Ethics is the gateway to God realization.

Every religion has its ethics. In Hinduism, Yama and Niyama of Patanjali Maharishi constitutes ethics. Maon Smriti, Yagnavalkya

Smriti and Parasma Smriti contain the code of conduct for man. The three kinds of austerity of Gita are nothing but the practice of ethics.

All cannot decide everything for themselves. Hence, rules of conduct have been laid down by the sages and seers from generation to generation.

Ethics is a relative science. What is good for one may not be good for another. What is good at one time and at one place may not be good at another time and at another place. Ethics is relative to man himself and to his surroundings.

Good conduct is the root of material and spiritual prosperity. It is good conduct which prolongs and fosters harmonious relationship and brings peace and happiness. It is good conduct that generates virtues. Therefore, the development of good conduct is of paramount importance. Ethical culture is the very pivot of spirituality.

Metaphysics rests on morality. Morality has Vedanta as its basis. The Upanishad says 'thy neighbour is in truth thy very self and what separates you from him is mere illusion.' Good conduct is the highest Dharma. It is the root of all Tapas, Righteousness, truth, good works, power and prosperity—all originate from right conduct. All that which is free from any motive of injury to any being is surely desirable. Moral precepts have been codified for social amity and individual self culture.

Do not leave the path of morality. Do not leave righteousness for the sake of some material gain. Build up character. Do not do any act which does not bring good to others or that act, which you will feel ashamed of. This is a brief description of what right conduct should be.

#### VARNASHRAMA DHARMA

The aim of Varoashrama Dharma is to promote the development of the universal, eternal Dharma. If you defend Dharma, it will defend you, if you destroy it, it will

destroy you. Therefore never destroy Dharma. This principle holds true of the individual as much as the nation. It is Dharma alone which keeps a nation alive. Dharma is the very soul of man. Dharma is the very soul of a nation.

The rules of Dharma have been laid down for regulating the worldly affairs of men. Dharma brings as its consequence happiness both in this world and in the next. Dharma is the means of preserving one's self. Dharma is the first and foremost Purnabhartha.

The duties of the castes are Varnadharma. The four principal castes of the Hindus are Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra. The four Ashramas are Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha and Sanyasa. The principle of Varnashrama Dharma is one of the fundamental principles of Hinduism.

Sri Krishna says in Gita, 'The four castes were emanated by Me by the different distribution of qualities and actions. Know Me to be the author of them, though I am actionless and inexhaustible' (Chap. IV 13).

Human society is like a huge machine. The individuals and communities are like its parts. If the parts are weak and broken, the machine will not work. A machine is useless without its parts. The human body also can work efficiently if its organs are in sound and strong condition. If there is pain in any part of the body, if there is disease in any organ of the body, this human machine will go out of order. It will not perform its usual functions. So is the case with the human society. Every individual should perform his duties efficiently. The underlying principle in the caste system or Varnadharma is division of labor. The Hindu Rishi formed an ideal scheme of society and an ideal way of individual life, which is known by the name, Varoashrama Dharma.

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warriors to the Kshatriyas and the masses to the Vaishyas and the Sudras. This system is indispensable to keep the society in a state of perfect harmony and order.

This division is according to the Guna and Karma of the individual. Each class contributes its heat to the commonweal or solidarity of the nation. There is no question of higher and lower division.

There are three qualities or Gunas, viz., Sattva (purity), Rajas (extrovert tendency) and Tamas (inertia). These three qualities are found in man in varying proportions. Sattva preponderates in some persons. These are Brahmanas. They are wise persons or thinkers. They are the priests, and the philosophers who guide rulers. In some Rajas is predominant. These are Kshatriyas. They are warriors and the ruling class. In some Tamas is predominant. They are Vaishyas or traders. They are, it is said, spiritually inert, in a way. They do business and agriculture and amass wealth. Sudras are the servants. None of these qualities are highly developed in them. They serve the other three castes. Guna (quality) and Karma (kind of work) determine the caste of a man. This is supported by Sri Krishna in Gita also.

Serenity, self restraint, austerity, purity, forgiveness, uprightness, knowledge, realization and belief in God are the duties of the Brahmanas, born of (their own) nature. Prowess, splendour, firmness, dexterity, fearlessness, generosity and hardiness are the qualities of the Kshatriyas, born of (their own) nature. Agriculture, cattle rearing and commerce are the duties of the Vaishyas, born of (their own) nature, and action consisting of menial service is the duty of the Sudras, born of (their own) nature.

Varnashrama Dharma is a characteristic feature of Hinduism. It is temperamentally prevalent throughout the whole world according to Gunakarma, though there is no distinct denomination of this kind. Varna does not

really mean the colour of the skin, but the colour of one's character or quality.

Peace and order will prevail in society only when all people do their respective duties efficiently.

The caste system has degenerated into Adherma during the past centuries. The upper classes gradually neglected their duties. The test of ability and character slowly vanished. Birth became the chief consideration in determining castes. All castes fell from their ideals and forgot all about their duties. Brahmins became selfish and claimed superiority over others by mere birth without possessing due qualifications. The Kshatriyas lost their chivalry and spirit of sacrifice. The Vaishyas became very greedy. They did not earn wealth by honest means. They did not look after the economic welfare of the people. They also lost the spirit of sacrifice. Sudras gave up service. The masses revolted against the codified form of slavery, and most naturally consequent ill treatment by the so called upper classes.

A Brahmin is no Brahmin if he is not endowed with purity and good character and if he leads a life of dissipation and immorality. A Sudra is a Brahmin if he leads a virtuous and pious life. Caste is a question of character. Conduct and character count and not lineage alone. If one is Brahmin by birth and at the same time if he possesses the virtues of the Brahmin, it is extremely good because the virtuous qualifications alone determine the birth of a Brahmin.

Untouchability is certainly a serious blot on Hinduism. This is the work of priests or Purohits on account of arrogant assumption of superiority. It is a heinous crime against humanity. There is no religious sanction for keeping anyone as an outcaste. This should have to be removed from Hinduism if it is to be recognized as a glorious religion.

#### ASHRAMA DHARMA

There are four Ashramas or stages in life, viz., Brahmacharya or the period of scholastic

education; Grehasatha or the period of family life, Venuprastha or the period of seclusion, and Sanyase or the life of renunciation. Each stage has its own duties. These stages help the evolution of man. The four Ashramas help one to attain perfection by successive stages. The practice of the four Ashramas regulates the life from the beginning to the end. The first two Ashramas pertain to Pravritti Marga or the path of work, the two latter stages pertain to the withdrawal from the world. They pertain to Nivritti Marga or the path of renunciation.

Life is very systematically and orderly arranged in Sanatana Dharma. There is opportunity for the development of the different sides of the human being. Suitable occupations and training are assigned to each period of life. Life is a great school in which the powers, capacities and faculties of man are to be developed gradually.

According to the Hindus, everyone should pass through the different Ashramas regularly. He should not enter any stage of life prematurely. He can enter the next stage only when the first has been completed. In nature, evolution is gradual. It is not revolutionary.

The first stage (Brahmacharya) is the period of study and self discipline. The student stays in the house of his preceptor and studies the Vedas and the other sciences. This is the period of probation for the responsibilities of the following stage of life. The life of the student begins with the Upanayana ceremony. He rises early, bathes, does Sandhya and Gayatri Jape. He studies the scriptures. He leads a very simple and hard life. He attempts to be honest in thought, word and deed. He serves his preceptor and observes celibacy.

After the end of his student career, he gives presents to his preceptor as per his ability and returns home to enter the household life. The preceptor gives the final instructions and sends the student home. The final instructions are "Speak the truth. Do your duty. Never swerve from the study of the Vedas. Do not cut off

the thread of progeny. Never swerve away from Truth and your Dharma. Never swerve from your duty. Never neglect your welfare. Never neglect your prosperity. Never swerve from the duties to the gods and the forefathers. Regard your mother as a god (Matru devo bhava). Regard your father as a god (Pitru devo bhava). Regard your teacher as a god (Acharya devo bhava). Regard your guest as a god (Atithi devo bhava). Let only those actions that are free from blemishes be done, and not others. Only those that are good acts to be should be performed by thee and not others."

The second stage is that of the Grahasatha (the life of a householder). The householder-stage is entered at marriage. Of all the Ashramas this is most important, because it supports all the others. Marriage is a sacrament for a Hindu. The wife is his partner of life. He cannot do any religious ritual without her. Husband and wife keep Rama and Sita as their ideal.

A householder should earn money by honest means and distribute it in the proper manner. He should be kind and charitable. He should enjoy sensual pleasures within the limit of the moral law. He should perform Yajnas.

Hospitality is one of his chief duties. He should serve the suffering humanity. He should lead a well disciplined religious life.

When the householder sees that his sons are able to hear the burden of his duties and when his grandsons are born, the time has come for him and his wife to retire from the world and spend their time in study and meditation.

The next stage is that of the Vanaprastha. Brahmacharya is a preparation for the life of the householder. Even so, Vanaprastha is a preparation for the final stage of Sanyase. After discharging all the duties of an householder, one should retire to the forest or to a solitary country with his wife and begin to meditate in solitude on the higher spiritual

values of life He is now free from social bonds and mundane responsibilities He has ample time for study of scriptures

In extraordinary cases, however, some of the stages may be omitted Suka was a born Sanyasin Shankara took to Sanyasa without entering the stage of a householder

The final stage is of a Sanyasin. When a man becomes a Sanyasin, he renounces all possessions, all distinctions of caste and creed, all rites and ceremonies and all attachments to any particular country, nation or religion. He lives alone and spends his time in meditation. He lives on alms. He rejoices in his own Self. He is quite indifferent to sensual pleasures. He is free from likes and dislikes, desires, egoism, lust, greed, anger, and pride. He has equal vision and balanced mind. He loves all. He roams about happily and disseminates Brahma Gyaana or Knowledge of the Self. He is the same in honour and dishonour, pride and censure, success and failure. He is now Ativarnesha brahma, above Varna and Ashrama. He is not bound by any social customs and conventions. All his endeavours are directed towards attaining perfection or freedom.

#### THE FOUR PATHS

The four main spiritual paths for God realisation are Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga and Jnana Yoga. Karma Yoga is suitable for a man of active temperament, Bhakti Yoga for a man of devotional temperament, Raja Yoga for a man of mystic temperament, and Jnana Yoga for a man of rational and philosophical temperament.

Mantra Yoga, Laya Yoga, Kundalini Yoga, Lambika Yoga and Hatha Yoga are other branches of Yoga. Yoga means union with God. The practice of Yoga leads to communion with the Lord. Whatever may be the starting point, the end reached is the same.

Karma Yoga is the way of selfless service. The selfless worker is called the Karma Yogi. Bhakti Yoga is the path of exclusive devotion to the Lord. He who seeks the union through

inva or devotion is called the Bhakti Yogi. Raja Yoga is the way of self restraint. He who seeks to have union with the Lord through mysticism is called the Raja Yogi. Jnana Yoga is the path of wisdom. He who seeks to unite himself with the supreme Self through philosophy and enquiry is called the Jnana Yogi.

The Yoga of synthesis is the most suitable and potent form of Sadhana. In the mind there are three defects, viz., Mala or impurity, Vikshepa or tossing and Avarena or veil. The impurity should be removed by worship or Upasana. The veil should be torn asunder by the practice of Jnana Yoga. Vikshepa or tossing of the mind should be controlled by the practice of Raja Yoga. Then only self realisation is possible.

Only the Yoga of synthesis can bring about an integral development. The Yoga of synthesis will develop the human personality in the most appropriate manner and lead the aspirant towards the goal of perfection. To become harmoniously balanced in all aspects is the ideal of religion. This can be achieved by the practice of the Yoga of Synthesis.

Man is a strange and a complex mixture of will, feeling and thought. He wills to possess the objects of his desires. He has emotion and so he feels. He has reason and so he thinks and ratiocinates. In some, the emotional element may preponderate, while in some others the rational element may predominate. Just as will, feeling and thought are not distinct and separate, so also, work, devotion and knowledge are not exclusive of one another.

To behold the one Self in all beings is Jnana or wisdom. To love the Self in all is Bhakti or devotion, and to serve the Self in all is Karma Yoga or the path of Service. When the Jnana Yogi attains a wisdom he is endowed with devotion and selfless spirit of service. Karma Yoga is for him a spontaneous expression of his spiritual nature, as he sees the one Self.

in all. When the devotee attains perfection in devotion, he is possessed of wisdom and also the spirit of service. For him also Karma Yoga is a spontaneous expression of his divine nature. The four paths are in fact one, in which the four different temperaments emphasise one or the other of its inseparable constituents. Yoga implies the method by which the Self can be seen, loved and served.

### AN IDEAL RELIGION

Hinduism is neither ascetism nor illusionism, neither polytheism nor pantheism. It is a synthesis of all types of religious experiences. It is a whole and complete view of life. It is characterised by wide toleration, deep humanity and high spiritual purpose. It is free from fanaticism. That is the reason why it has survived the attacks of the followers of the other great religions of the world.

The foundation of Hinduism has been laid on the pivot of spiritual truths. The entire structure of Hindu life is built on eternal truths, which were discovered by the Hindu Rishis or seers. That is the reason why this structure has lasted through scores of centuries.

Hinduism has within itself all the features of a universal religion. Its philosophy is grand. Its ethics is soul elevating. Its scriptures are wonderful. Its Sadhanas or Yoga Vedantic practices are unique. Glorious has been the past of this religion. Still more glorious will be its future. It has a message to give to a world rent asunder by hatred, dissension and wars. Its message is of cosmic love, truth and non-violence. Its message is of unity of the Self or the Upanishadic Oneness.

Hinduism provides spiritual food and Yoga Sadhanas for all sorts of people to suit their temperaments, capacity, taste and stage of evolution. In no religion you will find such a variety of practical Yoga practices and such a sublime and unique philosophy.

No religion is so very elastic and tolerant like Hinduism. Hinduism is very stern and rigid regarding the fundamentals. It is very

elastic in readjusting to the external formalities and the non essentials. That is the reason why it has succeeded in living through millennia.

Hinduism is a fellowship of faiths. It is all embracing and all inclusive. It prescribes Yoga Sadhanas even for a scavenger or a cobblar to attain God realisation while allowing him to do his ordinary vocation in the world. All sorts of philosophies are necessary. What appeals to one may not appeal to another. What is easy for one may be difficult for another. Hence the need for different standpoints. All philosophies of Hinduism are various points of view. They are true in their own way. They take the aspirant step by step, stage by stage, till he reaches the acme or the pinnacle of spiritual glory.

Hinduism is a world religion. The Hindus live in perfect harmony, peace and friendship with the followers of other faiths. Their tolerance and fellow feeling towards other religions are remarkable.

Glory to Hinduism! Glory to the Rishis and the seers who have kept burning the flame of Hinduism with its extreme effulgence and splendour!

### SAYINGS OF SANATANA DHARMA

1 Truth is one, sages call it variously

2 Brahman or the Absolute is the only Reality this world is unreal, Jiva or the individual soul is identical with Brahman

3 The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman

4 There is no salvation without the knowledge of the Imperishable

5 Karma Yoga or selfless action purifies the heart, Upasana or worship remedies oscillation of the mind. Jnana or wisdom removes the veil of ignorance

6 Know the Self through faith, devotion, meditation and Yoga

7 Brahman or the Absolute is Truth, Wisdom and Infinity.

8 OM is the symbol of Brahman

9 This Atman is to be seen, heard,

reflected and meditated upon.

10. He who respects and salutes the seniors, obtains longevity, knowledge, fame and strength.

11. A Jivanmukta or a liberated sage is ever peaceful and blissful. He has equal vision and balanced mind.

12. Truth alone triumphs; not falsehood.

13. Three things are very difficult to attain: the male birth (Manushyatwa), desire for liberation (Mumukshutwa) and the company of great souls (Maha Purnash Sanga).

14. The whole world is manifestation of the Lord.

15. Just as a lump of salt has neither inside nor outside and is equal in taste, so also has this Atman neither inside nor outside and is homogeneous in knowledge.

16. Without the grace of the Lord, one cannot attain Knowledge of the Eternal.

17. Conquest of mind is conquest of the world.

18. Whence have we come? Wither shall we go? These are the problems of life.

19. Not by actions, neither through progeny, nor by wealth, but through renunciation alone can Immortality be attained.

20. Just as all waters of the rivers have their meeting place in the ocean, so all our touches have their feeling in the skin, all tastes in the tongue, all odours in the nose, all colours in the eyes, all sounds in the ears, all perceptions in the mind, and all fruition in the heart.

On the outer surface of a melon one notices the marks of division, but when the melon is broken, it is found to be one homogeneous fruit. Even so, the exterior of Hinduism is cross-ribbed by sects and cults, but, in reality, this ancient religion is based on the essential principle of unity. Hinduism is thus comparable to a melon. There must be relative differences to suit different tastes and temperaments. These differences were created due to the unavoidable stresses of history. The spirit of Hinduism is to perceive unity in diversity and to allow maximum freedom to the rational mind to grow according to the law of its own growth. Our duty is to unconditionally accept the fundamentals of religion and choose the lesser formal principles according to our taste and condition of life. It should, however, never be overlooked that the divisions in Hinduism and its myriads of restrictions have been the secret of its survival. Otherwise, we would have gone the way of the ancient Egyptian, Sumerian, Assyrian, Persian, and the Maya civilisations.

21. Where nothing else can be seen, nothing else can be heard, and nothing else can be known, that is the Infinite or Bhuma.

22. Non-injury, truthfulness, non-covetousness, freedom from lust, anger and greed, and an attempt to do what is agreeable and beneficial to all creatures—this is the common duty of all castes.

23. When a man dies, his spirit goes into the fire, his breath into the Prana, his sight to the sun, his thought to the moon, his sense of hearing to the heavens, his body to the earth, his ego to the ether, his hairs to the plants and the trees, and his blood and his seed to the waters.

24. Where women are honoured, there the gods are pleased; but where they are not honoured, no sacred rite bestows fruits.

25. He who considers another's wife as his mother, his wealth as transitory, and all beings as himself, is wise,

26. There is no higher virtue than truthfulness, and no greater crime than falsehood.

27. Love alone conquers; not hatred.

28. Da, Da, De, (Damyata, Datta, Dayadwam). Be enabled. Give. Be merciful.

29. O Lord! Thou art woman, thou art man, thou art youth, thou art maiden; thou, as an old man totterest along on thy staff. Thou art born with thy face turned everywhere. Thou art the dark-blue bee. Thou art the green parrot with red eyes. Thou art the thunder-cloud, the seasons, the seas. Thou art without beginning, because thou art Infinite, thou, from whom all worlds are born.

—Swami Sivananda.

# Vedic Conception of God

SRI A.B.N. SINHA, PATNA

Religion presupposes belief in God. Infinite as God is, no finite words can describe Him. But in India, in the past, serious efforts were made in this direction. To find out whether there was God, to discover His attributes and to get at Him, the best intellects of the land addressed themselves. After scholars and savants betook themselves to the seclusion of the forests and pondered deep and long over what God was. These experiments, carried on in the sanctuary of nature's solitude, in an atmosphere of peace, with no cares to worry and no distractions to distract, were hequeathed from the preceptor to the disciple, and so on and so forth, till perfect wisdom stood well wrought and well planned to guide humanity in all ages. These perfected wise maxims are embodied in the Upanishadic portions of the Vedas.

There is nothing sacrosanct under the garb of revealed knowledge, however sacred this may be. Each maxim may be tested in the proper surrounding. It is said that certain qualifications are necessary in the aspirant who desires to realize God. When the renowned Pippalad was approached for instruction on

spiritual knowledge by six aspirants, each with a loadful of fuel-wood, they were advised to practice austerity, observe celibacy and develop faith for a year, before being taught the knowledge about God. To have correct awareness about God, it is necessary to lead a noble life, to acquire the power of right thinking and to possess an attitude of reverence.

'The Lord pervades all objects in the universe. Nothing can exist without Him. As far He is and He is yet the nearest. Within every object He is and yet outside the creation. The Lord is not the ear, but that which makes the ear to hear. Speech He is not, but He alone makes speech possible. Similarly, He is the breath of the breath and the eye of the eyes. Him no speech can express, but He makes one's speaking facilities to work; know Him to be God and not that.'



which people here generally worship. What cannot be seen with the eye, but through whom the eyes do see; know ye Him to be God and not that which people here generally worship. What cannot be comprehended by the mind, but through whom the mind can comprehend; what cannot be breathed with breath but

through whom breathing is rendered possible that is the Lord and not that which is worshipped in different climes under different names! This is what the Upanishads had taught us millennia ago.

God is truly comprehended by him who admits that He is incomprehensible, he knows Him not who thinks Him to be comprehensible. To those who boast of knowing Him, He is not known, but known He is to those who regard Him as incomprehensible. The Lord is truly a state of Consciousness. To the humble in spirit does the Lord make Himself known. Pride takes one away from Him. Riches and pleasures are but obstacles in the path of Realisation. This is the teaching of Hinduism.

True, God is within us, but for that reason alone He is not comprehensible. Within us He certainly is, but unless He without us. He is no God who would melt at the touch of reason, whom the light of commonsense cannot perceive and whom only certain types of bulldogs can locate. If the Lord can be invoked in Sanskrit alone or in any other language, He is not the Lord of the Universe. If enshrined in any particular mansion alone, He cannot be the one Lord of the Universe. If the illiterate or the untouchable has no access to Him, He cannot certainly be the Lord of all mankind. If you have to approach him through a particular individual or repeat a particular chant to get at Him, He would cease to be the one Lord of the Universe. If you are to be consigned to hell fire because a certain cast or individual does not command your nostrited faith, you had better not have an universal God at all. That is the Vedic conception of God.

Nowhere in the Vedas has the Lord been given a particular name. He may have been addressed as *Aum* in some places and as *Vishnu*, in some other, but these are not His exclusive names. A thousand and one names He may have, which might be necessary to describe and

emphasise particular characteristics of His end for the purpose of meditation on the Lord, a particular form may be selected, but it would be too much to say that other names or forms represent Him not that is the error that some religions seem to be perpetrating.

While proclaiming that the Lord adored by some believers is the one Lord of the entire universe people fail to allow to the Lord other names or other forms. While acknowledging that a certain individual was the favourite Son of the Lord, they would not have any other favourite of His as if He had any favourite at all. There can be no objection to the contention that God is to be approached through a particular prophet, provided other prophets are not condemned at the same time. It is most irrational to declare hell fire for the believers in another prophet, even if the gates of heaven is to be opened with the key of only one prophet alone. 'If you worship Me not you worship Setan' does not appear to be a responsible proposition, from a higher standard of judgment. It can be claimed for the Vedas that nowhere has such a narrow outlook been favoured. The Vedic religion preaches peace—peace to friend and foe, peace to the world at large, peace to the believers as well as the unbelievers, peace everlasting and all pervading peace to all.

The age of strife and war should have been passed by now. No burning of heretic by any religious bigot can now be tolerated. Religion is divine and it should be the mission of every believer in God to preach peace and toleration, right understanding and love among mankind. Religion cannot and does not sanction brutality against those professing a different faith. God is one, though prophets call Him by various names. God is love and love alone is God. That is why the Divine Life Society first lays stress on Service and Love, and next to them on Meditation and Realisation. Service with love will make one at one with the world and then alone can one meditate successfully and realise God.

# Main Features of Satya Dharma

SRI SURENDRANATH SEN GUPTA

[President, Satya Dharma Mandal Calcutta]

God is unalloyed Truth, absolute Truth  
His religion must necessarily be Truth itself  
We must accept Truth wherever it is found  
without any consideration for the country,  
race, or religion

What is Satya Dharma? This is the  
question of all questions and in its solution  
the world will find a sure remedy for all the  
ills that man is heir and subject to

Satya Dharma means the Religion of Truth  
*Satyam Jnanam Anantam Brahman*. Dharma  
means Religion, and God is Dharma Swarupa  
or Religion itself

Dharma is one and indispensable. Satya  
is one and is most intimately connected  
with each of God's infinite attributes. Dharma  
and Satya are synonymous. Satya Dharma  
may, therefore be called God's own religion.  
In other words the religion which existed  
exists and will exist till eternity, the religion  
which is nothing but truth and the religion  
which transforms evil into good, is known as  
Satya Dharma.

Wherever there is truth there religion is  
apparent. We must also remember that truth  
is uncompromising and we should be very  
careful in shifting the propensities of mundane  
life to the lesser, relative metamorphosis of  
truth, within the limits of moral law.

Satya Dharma enjoins *inter alia*

The observance of truth in thought, word  
and deed with the ultimate object of realising  
God who is the eternal embodiment of Truth.

Regular recitation of and meditation on  
the infinite attributes of the one God

Regular Upasana of God for our emanicipation  
from evil qualities and influences

Gradual development of the various  
befitting traits of character

Initiation from a spiritual preceptor who  
is competent to guide one towards the goal of

Self realisation or final Emancipation

Belief in the existence of innumerable  
spheres of different and successive degrees of  
subtlety in the universe, which are abodes of  
souls in different kinds of bodies and that the  
souls of men, after death, transmigrate to these  
spheres according to their spiritual progress  
attained during their earthly existence

Belief in the theory of rebirth

Reverence for the great persons of all ages  
and climes irrespective of their professed  
religion, cast, creed and nationality.

Spirit of oneness with all, and governing  
one's conduct in the light of that consciousness

Absence from all forms of mundane idol-  
atry or worship of any material values of life

Cultivation and exaltation of all noble  
qualities of the intellect and the heart in all  
walks of life, with utmost devotion, liberality  
of mind and free thinking

Development of knowledge of all kinds,  
material and spiritual

Restraint of the senses, subduing egotism  
and transcending selfishness.

And refusal to recognise the partiality arising  
out of racial differentiations and personal pre-  
judices and animosities.

To ascertain whether a religion is true or  
perfect, it must be made to pass through  
the following tests

Religion must be wide and comprehensive  
enough to properly guide every created soul  
along the right path, befitting to the stage of  
life he has already attained.

Religion must be catholic and cosmopolitan  
enough to meet the need of all human beings  
in different walks of life and must not create  
or place any obstacle by way of dogmatic  
taboos in their onward and upward march  
towards the final goal.

Religion must contain such elements of

cocord and agreement as are potent enough to resolve difference and divergencies.

Religion must have rules and prescriptions for Upasana and Sadhana for the harmonious development of all the faculties lying latent in man.

Religion must recognise that man everywhere has the same inherent rights and privileges, irrespective of his station and position in life.

The sanctions and mandates of religion, both permissive and prohibitive, must be equally applicable to one and all.

Religion must satisfy the eternal urge of

man to provide for a better and higher life.

Religion must strive for universal harmony and peace instead of creating or fomenting discord and dissension.

Religion must place morality and spirituality above all rituals or ceremoniala.

And Religion must prescribe rules for purging the intellect of all grossness and impurities and for the gradual elimination of all mundane Samskaras from the mind.

It will be found that Satya Dharma or the religion of Truth does fulfil all these conditions required of a really genuine religion.

## Vaidik Dharma

PANDIT S CHANDRA

{Representative, International Aryan League}

One may ask how and why the Vaidik Dharma is said to be as old as the creation of the universe. To answer and explain this, I shall have to go into a bit of detail. We all know that every government is a civilized country maintains a certain code, constitution, or laws and regulations to keep order and discipline among its people, as otherwise there will be chaos and disorder. No government of the world has been absolute, final, perfect and infallible. Hence, it has been necessary to change and modify human laws according the exigencies of time.

Similarly, the vast universe, created and governed by God, also has a certain definite constitution or laws and regulations, which maintains the cosmic equilibrium. The knowledge of God is absolute, final, perfect and infallible. God is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. Therefore, the governing laws for the entire universe laid down by God must also be inexorable. These laws are meant to serve and fulfil the needs of all times, unlike the laws and constitutions of the governments of the

human beings which vary from place to place according to political ideologies. As God is the ruler of the universe, His laws cannot be exclusive to a particular land, nation, clan, or race but they have to be universally applicable to one and all. These laws are primordial, eternal, universal, cosmopolitan and all embracing truths, which constitute the one, universal Religion of humanity or Sarvabhaumi Macaya Dharma. These truths are comprised of all the noble and good qualities needed for the well-being and advancement of the individual as well as of the entire human society. This religion is called, in other words, the Vaidik Dharma.

The Vaidik Dharma is revealed in a cyclic order along with the cycle of creation. It makes two classifications of the human beings. One is Arya meaning noble and righteous in thought, word and deed and obeying the commands of God, and the other is Anarya, meaning ignoble and wicked and disobeying the commands of God.

The characteristics of the Vaidik Dharma are briefly given as follow:

One should pray and act for the progress of the whole world and subordinate personal interest or gain to the larger interest or benefaction of humanity

God has created this universe for the sake of the transmigratory evolution and emancipation of individual souls

Man is free in his actions, but he cannot eschew the fruits of his actions, either good or bad, so long he maintains the sense of individuality. This is known as the Karma theory or Karma philosophy

Transmigration of soul is inevitable unless one attains Moksha or Salvation. There is no mediator between man and God

Observance of piety, morality, love, service, righteousness, nobility, fellow-feeling, kindness towards all creatures, gentleness, sympathy, help, co-operation, and also Ahimsa, Satya, Brahmacharya, tolerance, justice, straightforwardness, forgiveness, fraternalism, rationalism, scientific and methodical approach to all the problems and similar other good qualities which cannot be denied, questioned and refuted by commonsense— are, in short, the fundamental tenets of the Vaidik Dharma

The religion of the Vedas is often mistaken to be only a set of ritualistic formulae and prayers, but it is, in fact a thorough unfolding of all the potentialities in man— physical, mental and spiritual. The principles of this religion cover all the departments of life—excluding none. Its aim is to make man divine.

Saying prayers is not our only duty. The most important thing is to translate the spirit of those prayers into action. We

must be Dharmic (religious) in our daily temporal duties. The best way of coming near to God is to lead a righteous life and to serve humanity together with prayer and meditation

According to the Vaidik Dharma this entire world is the vast unit of one human family. The people living in it are the members of this common family

The spirit of this homogeneous unity has been beautifully explained in the *Rig Veda*,

अनेषाते अकनिष्टुते एते संप्रातरो वाव्युः सौमाय ।

युग्माता स्वात् एव एषा शुदुया पृथिवीः मुदाना प्रस्त्रयः ॥

॥ ५ । ५६ । ५ ॥

All humankind are like common members of a family. There is none superior among them, none inferior by birth. God is the Father of all beings and the earth is their Mother. It is only by living up to this ideal that people can truly live in peace and prosperity.

The need of the hour is to realize this spirit of oneness. Today the world is torn into a thousand shreds by racial prejudices, ideological antagonism, uncompromising intolerance, stupendous vanity and bitter hatred. The question that looms large over the horizon is whether we should follow our present course and perpetuate war and unhilled distress, or we should direct all our endeavours towards the realization of the unity of mankind. The religion of the Vedas shows us the way. Let mankind derive inspiration from this eternal faith and live in peace and harmony with one another.

The righteous man, having nothing to hide, committing no acts which require stealth and harbouring no thoughts and desires which he would not like others to know, is fearless. His step is firm, his body upright, and his speech direct and without ambiguity. How can he fear any, who wrongs none? How can he be ashamed before any, who deceives none? Ceasing from all wrong, he can never be wronged, ceasing from all deceit, he can never be deceived. It is impossible for evil to overcome good, so the righteous man can never be brought low by the unrighteous.

# Vedanta : a Universal Philosophy

(*Sri Swami Mounanandaji*)

"Man has structural relation with three things—the World, the Soul and God," says Kant. It is in vain that man tries to escape these. No matter what he is or what he does, these haunt him, openly or covertly, and press for the most earnest possible consideration. The problem of life and death which confronts him sooner or later, often in the most poignant circumstances demands a solution and will not be denied an answer. Religion is thus a constitutional necessity for man and an essential element in all human progress. But, obviously, one religion will not suit the whole of mankind, differing stages of mental development and varying degrees of spiritual evolution require, naturally, different phases of religious thought and practice. In the spiritual economy of the world therefore, all religions have their explanation, place and purpose. What, then, gives rise to religious intolerance and quarrels (with which unfortunately we have been only too familiar in the history of the world) and what has been rendering all dreams of a universal religion more or less chimerical?

## REASDN FDR DIVISIONS

It is the unwise insistence on the externals that has been responsible for such deplorable divisions. If, instead of needlessly and disproportionately emphasizing such externals, mankind had only tried to stand by the essence of the various religions, its history would have been a different and a happier tale. All religions, however different they may be in the rituals they lay down, the doctrines they preach and the rewards they promise, have a sufficiency of common elements which constitute their essence and which are

strikingly similar even where they are not identical. A philosophical system which embraces all such elements and will cover all human needs for spiritual solace is what is needed most now and may yet prove the one and only means of bringing mankind together in amity and saving it from disruption, disasters and death. Such a philosophy, is available in the Vedanta, and India would only be justifying her reputation for spiritual insight and wisdom, if she were to make herself instrumental in bringing about world unity and achieving abiding peace on earth through a universally acceptable religious philosophy like the Vedanta.

## CONFUSION AND MISUNDERSTANDING

What is the Vedanta, then, and what gives it such a universality? As everyone knows, the Vedanta is the philosophy contained in the Upanishads, the Brahma Sutras and the Bhagavad Gita. But it has been the subject of great misunderstanding and great misrepresentation in India and outside. Great confusion has been caused in regard to the nature and scope of the philosophy, due mainly to the fact that both the Eastern and Western scholars responsible for the confusion devoted all their attention to a mere intellectual grasp of the subject but never had any practical experience or realization in life of the great truths in it. Learning is one thing, and practical realization is another. The result has been that exceedingly strange notions have come to prevail in our own country, and consequently in a much more exaggerated form in other lands, about the Vedanta in relation to the final state of Self realization. Without digression into the nature and contents of its doctrines, an

instance may be given by way of illustration of the kind of false ideas current about the spiritual ideal of life and its practical realization.

It is believed that the object of spiritual Science is by means of certain methods of self-torture and auto-hypnotism, to enable man to live on earth as long as he likes, to subsist without food, to live buried underground, to become proof to wind and weather, and so forth! Nothing can be a greater travesty of the truth. Nowhere in the Upanishads, Brahma Sutras or the Bhagavad Gita is such a fantastic achievement adumbrated as the goal of life! Indeed, a specific question as to the ways of the Man of Wisdom is asked by Arjuna, and Krishna does not indicate anywhere any such mystic states as necessary, nor even desirable. Again, in that most beautiful of the Upanishads—the Katha—young Nachiketas is told by his grim preceptor, "When the desires which were cherished



Sri Swami Mounananda

in the heart cease, then the mortal becomes immortal; this alone is the instruction of the Vedas." Not a word from Yama to his pupil about the conversion of the body into a weather-delving rock! The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is dominated by the busy king Janaka and the giant debater Yajnavalkya. In the Chhaadoya Upanishad, again, there is no mention of immortality to the body, either in the teachings of Uddalaka to his beloved son Svetaketu

nor in the conversation between Narada and Sanatkumara. The Mandukyopanishad points out distinctly that the Atman is different from all physical states; and in the words of the Varahopanishad, just as striking at an ant-hill will not destroy the snake within it, no amount of bodily torture can kill the mind within. And so on with the whole range of authorities. And yet, in spite of all this, persistent notions of a ridiculous nature are entertained about the

Vedanta! The fact is that, when falsehood obtains a start over truth, even when it is caught, it is only scotched, rarely killed!

#### A SCIENTIFIC DOCTRINE

The Vedanta, indeed, teaches nothing unnatural, fanciful, forced or false. Its strength lies in its scientific nature, as it recognizes implicitly and is based on the universal law of evolution. Man is its study, man who has to develop from the brute to the divine. The most primitive section of the human race is not too

low for its notice, and the highest possible realization is the end it promises to one and all. Its range is, therefore, the widest possible; and as every man has some sort of religion or the other, all the religions of the world come within its range. "Discipline and progress" are its watchwords. The snake-worshipper, for instance, who thinks that the serpent is the only God, is told that the serpent is God. But, as that God must be everywhere and all-wise, the worshipper is

gradually led on to see in the serpent only one of the many symbols through which God may be worshipped. One step further, and the symbol is forgotten or gets an esoteric significance, acceptable even to the highest philosopher, and the thing symbolized becomes all in all. In this natural and graduated manner, God always gets the better of the idol in the Vedanta!

#### NATURAL AND DEMOCRATIC

From what has been said above about the catholicity of the Vedanta it will be seen also that in its very nature it is extremely democratic. It is said that in the United States of America every man has the right and liberty of hoping to be the President someday. An exactly similar freedom prevails in the religious field. Everyone can aspire to the highest possible result, viz., Self realization, provided of course, he has or develops the necessary capacity for it. Cases of men of the lowest caste, achieving the most glorious results and becoming objects of reverence and adoration throughout the land are instances in point. The process of such evolution is extremely natural, almost inevitable. No conversion is attempted, and no restraint is placed on any one. The Vedanta simply holds the grand and living ideal before all and everyone is called upon to grow for oneself from within. The examples of perfect men exercise a steady influence and instil into every man, irrespective of caste, creed and calling, the hope of himself becoming one. The result is that everyone aspires in one's own way for religious realization through a path best to his capacity and temperament. However different may be its manifestations, the spirit is the same throughout, and there is an eager and hopeful looking forward towards the ideal of ultimate liberation.

#### FAITH IN THE REALITY

Another feature of the Vedanta which

contributes to its universality is that it is based on an invincible faith in the Providential Government of the universe and in the omniscience of the Power that upholds it. This naturally leads to the result that it never hastily condemns anything that draws attention to the good that may be in it. It has such an unshakable faith in natural and gradual growth that it always seeks to correct, not by force, but by wonderful and silent magic of high and powerful ideals. To take an example, flesh eating is a practice prevalent in all quarters of the globe. The Vedanta preaches kindness and love towards the whole of creation and condemns flesh eating, and many sects in India accordingly adopted total abstinence from the practice. But it must be a long time before the whole of mankind does so. Till then, the Vedanta says to the flesh eater, "Friend, if you are fond of meat at least let the animals you kill be an offering to God before becoming your food." The injunction of the Srutis is that, if one had a craving for flesh, one was free to take it after offering it to the gods at a duly performed sacrifice. This is obviously only a device to keep one away from flesh on all other occasions, and as these sacrifices were far from easy to perform and could therefore, be only few and far between one is to effect prevented from much indulgence in flesh eating. This view is confirmed by the further injunction of the Srutis that, after a few Yajnas (sacrifices), the (flesh) offerings are only to be smelt and left (and not eaten). The ultimate objective of the whole arrangement may thus be seen to be to wean people entirely from flesh eating, though as a matter of policy, this is wisely attempted to be brought about by gradual stages as shown above.

The advantage is that a new idea is brought into play and will have a whole

some effect till precept, practice and example work to the desired end. This will give an idea of how the Vedanta works. Whatever is necessary, it says and the great secret of its success is sympathy. It condemns no man as beyond hope, never looks upon anyone as accursed but takes all mankind faltering within its fold and trusts the silent work of time, the unfaltering law of Karma and the inspiring power of living ideals, to take care of the growth of individuals as well as of societies.

#### RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

In addition to its catholicity and liberality of outlook, the Vedanta has strength enough to form the backbone of all the religions in the world. There is nothing in it not deeply and firmly rooted in the very nature of things, and its theories are such as not even the most rigorous logic could disturb, much less dislodge. Its truths can stand the severest tests and need be accepted only on direct personal experience. It postulates nothing which cannot be verified. Religion is said to be a matter of faith. This is so, no doubt. But if this is stretched beyond religion and made to extend to philosophy also then no progress is possible, and both will perish ultimately. For, philosophy is the rational sanction of religion, just as religion is to some extent at least, philosophy made popular and, in the highest sense, philosophy lived out. Any divorce of one from the other or the equation of one with the other is bound to lead to mischievous results and prove often fatal to both. This will explain, it may be remarked in passing, why many of the religions of the world have caused dissatisfaction to some of the greatest intellects that were born into them, while the truths taught by the various prophets of the world have on them the stamp of immortality, the religious institutions

which erected themselves on these were highly unphilosophical and their theories on various matters which religion has to deal with have been unable to withstand the terrific onslaughts of modern science.

#### SECRET OF SURVIVAL

But the Vedanta does not lay any stress on any non-essential element which scientific researches can overthrow. This is because the Vedanta has never mistaken the purpose of religion and has always carefully abstained from intruding on the province of science. Even its theory of creation, beautifully elaborated as it is, is not stressed, as it says that an enquiry into how this material universe grew pertains to relative experiences, not to Reality, it is enough for its purpose that the world is only phenomenal and can be nothing else than a manifestation of the universal Consciousness (or God). To a votary of the Vedanta, who seeks to realize God within his own body, the hereafter is perfectly immaterial. The Vedanta assures that man can alchemize his mind into the universal Consciousness put an end to the recurring misery of birth and death and become God Himself! Indeed the Vedanta is the only philosophy which dares call man God not merely the son of God or His servant. Universal brotherhood is too low an expression to denote its abounding love. It speaks of universal Selfhood! "He who sees the universe in himself and himself in the universe is the perfect man" repeatedly declare the Upanishads. The stronghold of the Vedanta, therefore, can stand foursquare to all the winds that might blow and could never be assailed or shaken.

#### AN ALL-EMBRACING FOLD

The Vedanta philosophy is thus seen to be liberal enough to enclose within its sphere all the religions of the world and

suffering, errors of judgment decay, death, etc., to which the individuals are subjected that the primeval ignorance therest, which is the root cause of all the other afflictions, is an act of the will of the individual soul which even in its state of apparent bondage is ever free, and is therefore capable of being eradicated by a contrary act of volition based upon right perception or the knowledge of the true nature of the soul as being above the limitations of time, space and causation, and that such perception or knowledge arises in oneself as the result of study, reflection and meditation (Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana) accompanied by the observance of the rules of moral and physical disciplines such as non injury, truth speaking straightforwardness freedom from anger hatred envy, etc., moderation in diet, inward and outward purity, and so on.

#### SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

It is now clear that the above is the doctrine of the Jnana Marga (Path of Knowledge) but that, since meditation formed its concluding part, knowledge, according to it, did not merely mean hookish knowledge but such knowledge realized by a process of self integration technically called Dhyana Yoga, i.e., the union of the Atman or the individual soul with the Paramatman, the source sustenance and the destination of all creations. This is a purely mental process, not involving any physical exercises intended to cause any physiological changes in the body. But since meditation is not possible, unless the mind is steady, and since it is not possible for all and sundry who aspire for self-realization to acquire sufficient control over it to make it steady at will the seers who had a special liking for the Atharvaveda, gradually evolved by experimentation a course of discipline involving exercises

of the vital breath accompanied by certain devices of postures, which had the ultimate effect of causing certain physiological changes in the inner structure of the body, calculated to enable aspirants to acquire control over the mental apparatus. This laid the foundation of the method of Hatha-Yoga, i.e., the union of "Ha," the Prana or inhaled air and "Tha," the Apana or exhaled air. It is clear from the object for which this remedy was required to be resorted to, that it could not be an end in itself but a means to an end. It is therefore an optional process which those in need of it may resort to for acquiring control over the subconscious operation of the mind in order that it can be engaged first in concentration on one preconceived object and can then be meditated upon for the purpose of Self-realization. The early beginnings of the practice of this Yoga can be seen from some of the hymns of the Athervaveda and the Mandukya and Prasna Upanishads.

#### THE MEANS AND THE END

The above were not the only experiments that were being carried on for devising means for bringing the mind round to operate according to the will of the aspirants. There were other sages who tried the method of active thinking over the constituent part of the compound-syllable "Om" believed to be a name of the Supreme Being and the significance of each of them and of the syllable as a whole. Others again tried reflection over sacred Gayatri Mantra, which the "twice-born" are enjoined to repeat during their Sandhya rite for invoking the sun-god to direct their intellect in the right direction, on identifying their Atman with the same god. This was the beginning of the method of Mantra-Yoga. This, too, was a method of a subsidiary nature, because the ultimate object of even these Mantra-Yogins like

that of the Hatha-Yogins was to turn away the mind from the direction of thinking over the past experiences or future anticipations connected with the "non-selves" to that of concentrating on the pure Self. The evidence of the beginnings of this Yoga can be gleaned in the Chhandogya Upanishad and an advanced stage thereof in the Mandukya.

The above are the cases of the sages, according to whose belief after an aspirant has taken to the path of Self realization, he must give up the observance of the Vedic rites, which in technical language was designated as entering the order of "Sannyasa," and was preceded by a formal rite of "Pravrajya," a term which literally meant "going abroad", i.e., to say leaving one's dwelling house either for roaming about or for living in a secluded place as Yajnavalkya is said, in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, to have done after initiating his wife Maitreyi in the Brahmanavidya. This was the settled belief of the Jnana Yogins. But there were other sages, mostly the royal sages who did not believe it to be absolutely essential for the pursuit of the goal of Self realization to leave one's home and give up all worldly and religious pursuits. They laid stress on the necessity of cultivating indifference towards the sense objects by living in their midst and resisting the impulses generated by coming in contact with them, and of discharging religious duties without desiring for fruits. The examples of such royal sages found in the Chhandogya and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads or those of kings Janaka, Asvapati, Kekaya and Jaivali. This was the method of Karma Yoga. It involved a Samuccaya (combination) of the paths of Karma and Jnana. The text of the Isavasya Upanishad shows that Yajnavalkya, too, had in his early life recommended this method.

#### ANNIHILATION OF DESIRE

The aim of the followers of both the Karma-Sannyasa and Karma Yoga schools being the realization of the absolute nature of the Atman and the consequent attainment of immunity from the effects of the Karma, both religious and secular, it is but natural that they should be engaged in the least possible amount of activity, and that in the case of so much of it also their attitude towards the results flowing from it should be that of complete indifference towards them, so that further involvement in the whirlpool of Samsara may not take place, and freedom from the existing one the result of past acts done in the state of ignorance, may be secured. This meant the non-entertainment of desires for wealth, fame, status, means of personal comforts, etc., and the conscious suppression of egoism, and consequently a highly spiritual ideal of life. Naturally, such an Ideal cannot be expected to have been cultivated and zealously pursued by the large mass of the Indian people even of that age. That so far as that age is concerned it was being pursued by a limited number of Brahmanas and Kshatriyas is also easily gathered from the Upanishads of that age. Not only that. It can also be seen that the ideal of the sages who had taken to the pursuit of the Adhyatmavidya or Brahmanavidya in the early part of that age must have been that of the investigation of spiritual means for the fulfilment of all conceivable desires, and that it was in the latter part of it only that the said high ideal of the killing of all desires had been evolved, because it was discovered from the instances of persons who had attained such Siddhis that the faculty to transmigration could not be overcome so long as the heart remained tainted by the longings for wealth, fame, material happiness,

ness, etc. In order to be convinced of this truth one has to read carefully and critically chapter VIII 12 to 15 of the Chhandogya, chapter VI 1 to 4 of the Brihadaranyaka, and chapter III 1-2 of the Mundaka, in the last of which there is evidence of both the ideals being simultaneously pursued by different persons according to their inclinations.

#### TANTRA YOGA

The fact that in these early Upanishads there are no references to the six Chakras, the Kanda, the four Pithas, the Vahnisthana, the Kundalini, the process of rousing it and the development of its latent powers, which are said in some of the Upanishads of the Smarta class such as the Jabala Darsana, Trisikhī Brahmana, Varaha, Yoga chudamani and several others to enable the Yogis to perform miracles, leads to the inference that no beginning had been made in that early age of the kind of Yoga known as the Tantra Yoga or Kundalini-Yoga. That inference is supported by the facts that the processes of rousing of the Kundalini, and the development of the Chakras and the union of the Kundalini, which is said to be a microcosmic form of the Sakti of the Lord Siva, with the Linga (symbol) of the Lord located in the portion of the head above the forehead, were dependent upon the Hatha-Yoga, the Yoga of the Prana and the Apana, as explained in details in some of the later Upanishads and in the specific treatises on that Yoga such as the Siva-Samhita, Gheranda Samhita and Hatha-Yoga-Pradipika and in those on the Tantra Yoga such as the Mahanirvana Tantra, Kularnava-Tantra and others, and that the process of Pranayama itself was in the experimental stage in the age of those early Upanishads. It was in a later age that the Yogis who set a higher value on Self-realization and the peace of mind resulting therefrom progressed from the Hatha-Yoga

to what is called Raja-Yoga in the above special treatises, and those who valued more the acquisition of miraculous powers progressed from the same Yoga to the Tantra-Yoga, which lays special emphasis on the development of the powers latent in the six Chakras from Muladhara to Ajna.

#### LAYA YOGA

Laya-Yoga is the name given to that variety of Yoga in which the objective aimed at is the suspension of the average activity of the mind by concentration on the internal sounds which begin to be heard by a Yogi. As this cannot commence until the internal air is rarefied to such an extent as to be able to enter the subtle veins, and the only way to cause its rarefaction is to sit in a particular posture, the outer air being breathed in and the dormant fire in its seat in the perineum vivified by the action of the latter air thereon and made so to act on both the airs as to make them subtle enough to enter any of the veins, the Laya-Yoga is subsidiary to the Hatha-Yoga in the etymological significance of that term. It is also subsidiary to the Raja-Yoga because the Laya (suspension) of the mind is not the ultimate objective but a means in another higher one namely, Self realization by the attainment of the state of Samadhi. Whatever it is, it does not seem to have been known to or consciously availed of for attaining Samadhi by the sages of the early Upanishadic age, as it seems to have been by those of the later one in which were composed the Smarta Upanishads such as the Nadabindu, although the restraint of the vital breath as a means for bringing the mind under one's control and the visualization of the Atma-jyoti or the Paramjyoti—whose powers become manifest in diverse ways in the individual organisms and the forces of nature—seems from the Mundaka, Katha and Svatasvatara to have been known and

that there is absolutely nothing else that exists except the Atman which is identical with the universe and which transcends it, that the nature of illusive consciousness is like that of water in a sandy desert seen from a distance under the glare of the sun's rays, that the Atman is ever free there being naught else existing which could bind it, and that it is only because the average human being cannot from the very start be convinced of that extraordinary truth that the sages had spoken of Brahman as the instrumental and material cause of the phenomenal world.

I have however refrained from mentioning it at the outset, not because I agree with some of the medieval commentators and modern interpreters of the Upanishads that the texts on which that view has been based do not justify such a view of the Upanishadic teaching considered as a whole, but because when that view is accepted there is no scope left for basing any religion thereon, since the very concept of religion implies the admission of an individual soul as the adorer or propitiator of a deity distinct from it and deserving to be adored or propitiated by it, and while such an admission is not possible according to such a theory, an act of adoration or propitiation is itself impossible.

#### BELIEFS AND IDEALS

It is clear from that investigation that broadly speaking the people of that age had a predominantly religious bent of mind, but that all of them were not at the same intellectual level, and that, therefore, although all of them had a belief in the existence of superhuman and supernatural entities capable of helping them in the attainment of their objects on being invoked to do so, they differed amongst themselves as to their beliefs, ideals and religious practices. The men of the lowest intellectual calibre had no idea about the

existence of a soul distinct from their physical bodies, their only anxiety was therefore to secure the means of sensual pleasure and to avoid miseries, and therefore the only religious observances and rites in which they were engaged, either independently or with the help of priests, were those from which such immediate benefits were expected to accrue. In a word they looked up to the deities of their liking and prayed and offered oblations to them under the expectation that being pleased the latter would reciprocate with them by bringing health, wealth and happiness within their reach, which it was not within their power to secure by any other means.

At a somewhat higher level there were others who believed in the existence of a soul distinct from the physical body, which did not become extinct with death and was both the doer of actions and the enjoyer of the fruits accruing therefrom both in this life and after death, and in that of a deity who dealt out rewards for good deeds and punishments for bad ones, and had therefore developed a moral conscience and were consequently thoughtful and anxious to accumulate religious merit and avoid demerit, but were not conscious of the potentiality of the soul to rise up to a higher level than even the gods by self effort. On a still higher level there were others who had by reflection arrived at the truth that like the laws governing the forces of nature there was a law of Karma, by whose operation the human soul was liable to be born again and again on this earth and suffer the consequences of the acts which had been done in previous births but had not till then borne fruit, and that this process goes on endlessly until the soul rises above the operation of that law by self-effort made for moral and spiritual elevation.

### PATHS OF NIRVITTI AND PRAVRITTI

There was a large number of sub-groups amongst the persons of this group owing to remarkable differences between the deities sought to be propitiated the positions aimed at and the means found suitable and resorted to for the attainment thereof including the modes of life led during the periods of the continuance of the efforts Broadly speaking, these persons were divided into two sub groups, namely those who had adopted the Nirvitti Marga (path of retirement) and those who had adopted the Pravritti-Marga (path of activity), technically known as the Samkhya yogins and the Karma yogins, respectively. Roughly speaking, the former looked upon knowledge alone as the means of salvation, while the latter looked upon knowledge combined with disinterested action as the means thereof. But considered more critically even the former could not avoid being engaged in some acts which were absolutely necessary for the continuance of life on this earth in the embodied state, and therefore they too were required to realize their ideal of inaction by a resort to the belief based upon the Samkhya doctrine that the pure Self has no function to perform when one is engaged in an act but that the Prakrti as dominated by one set of combination of its three characteristics operates on itself as dominated by another set of combination thereof. That being so, the principal point of distinction between the Jnana-yogins and Karma yogins was that whereas the former having abandoned their families and homes did not perform the Vedic and domestic rites the latter did perform them with the same kind of indifference to their fruits or on dedicating them to the deity as the other acts of necessity in which they were engaged.

### MODES OF APPROACH

The observance of certain virtues which

were calculated to purify the heart and elevate the mind and also, to minimize the chances of fresh bonds being created such as celibacy, non-covetousness, non-injury to other creatures straightforwardness, etc., was common to the Yogins of both the classes, but in the case of the Karma-yogins such relaxation as the natures of their respective callings rendered necessary was considered not harmful if the acts involving departure from strict observance were done as unavoidable duties incidental to their callings and their respective positions in the prevalent social organization. For the realization of their ideal again the Jnana-yogins of the higher type depended upon the grace of the Self in their hearts designated as the Atman, while such Yogins of the middle and the lower types and the Karma yogins depended upon the grace of the same Supreme Ruler who was looked upon as a personal God who could be prevailed upon, by earnest prayers and a pure pious life, to have compassion on the individuals whose powers of knowledge thought and action were limited.

The grace of either the Self or the Supreme Being could not however be expected without self-exertion on the part of the aspirants, in the form of the practice of self-integration. The study of and reflection over the teaching of the Vedantic texts either under a well qualified teacher or independently were therefore essential for all the Yogins, and those who had vagrant minds were also required to take recourse to any of the preliminary courses of Mantra-Yoga, Bhakti-Yoga and Hatha-Yoga in order to enable them to turn away their minds from the thoughts about the "non-selfs" either previously experienced or desired to be experienced in future. The Upanishads of this period do not seem to be aware of the rise of any of the theological schools with a sectarian bias as do

those of the epic age. Even in the Svetasvatara, Rudra is a "Maharishi" and his name "Maheshvara" only signifies Saguna-Brahman described as the highest Lord.

### COMMON MAN'S RELIGION

The religion of the masses even in that age was of a different type. They, too, believed in the existence of a Supreme Being or a large number of invisible beings of a superior or inferior order and in the Law of Karma regulating their lives in this world and those after death and in their liability to be born again and again in the different orders of creation as the result of the operation of that law. But their only anxiety was to secure happiness and avoid miseries in this and subsequent lives. They therefore strove each according to one's means, for the realization of that ideal as best as one could, by the adoption of the traditional triple means of "Yajna" (sacrificial acts), "Dana" (charitable and religious gifts) and 'Tapas' (practice of austereities). For guidance in this matter they were dependent upon the members of the priestly class, either because they had not the capacity to read and understand the scriptural texts relating to the Vedic religion, or because they were too much occupied with the activities relating to the acquisition of their means of livelihood and the other necessities of a social life.

### MODERN CIVILIZATION

Let us now turn our eyes to the modern civilization and the lines of thought on which it is based. Taking a bird's eye view of the kinds of civilized life prevailing in all the organized states of the world what strikes us at once is the predominance of the civilization of the western type in all of them to a greater or lesser extent. That is a new civilization based upon the knowledge of the outside world derived from the discoveries of modern science and its application to human affairs on a large

scale. Thus, discoveries have been enabling man to acquire greater and greater control over the forces of nature and so to mould their courses as to be serviceable to him in the greater and greater fulfilment of his innate desires for the production of the necessities of life and the means of material comforts, with the assistance of machines, to travel over long distances within very short periods of time, to communicate with others residing in any part of the globe as if they were near him, and so on.

### THE MACHINE AGE

But since the installation and operation of the machines require big plots of land, large quantities of raw materials and large groups of men working under skilled technicians, since the machines also cannot profitably be made on small scales, the quantities of goods produced cannot be sold but within the limits of each producing country, however large its size and howsoever thickly populated, it may be, and since it is in the interest of the government of each country to help its enterprising industrialists and merchants to secure the possession of lands in other countries and raw materials from the countries where the natural conditions are more favourable for their production in sufficiently large quantities, as well as due to various other allied reasons, these discoveries and the inauguration of the machine age by their application have brought in their train several evils such as class wars between the capitalists and labourers in the countries of the Western hemisphere and bitter rivalries between them *inter se* for getting possession of lands, labour recruits, raw materials and marketing fields for the disposal of surplus products of capital and consumer goods. They solved their internal conflicts in the best ways suitable to them, and the more powerful amongst them settled the disputes between themselves by entering into

treaties of non-interference in one another's sphere of influence

### THE WORLD WARS

Yet, an opportunity for a great trial of military strength arose when the Kaiser of Germany made attempts to create an empire by subjugating the smaller nations of Europe and the weaker potentates in Africa. The combined strength of England, France and Spain would not have checked his aggressive marches had not the United States of America thrown in its weight on the side of the allied forces. For the time being the first World War came to an end the leaders of the German nation having deposed and exiled the Kaiser and sued for peace. But it had not forgotten the humiliation to which it had been put, and having made secret preparations for nearly 15 years after the termination of the first world war, Germany under Hitler restarted its career of conquest by attacking Poland and overrunning the countries situated on its west. Mussolini of Italy inspired by a desire to revive the empire of ancient Rome similarly had earlier overrun Abyssinia in Africa. England and France again sought and got the assistance of the government of the U.S.A. The attack on Pearl Harbour in the Pacific ocean by the Japanese involved the U.S.A. into actual war with the Axis powers. Then Germany also got involved into war with the U.S.S.R., and the allied powers finally emerged victorious.

### THE POWER BLOCKS

Yet, an irreconcilable difference arose between the western powers and the U.S.S.R. when the time came for the allocation and reorganization of the conquered territories and settling the terms of the treaties to be made with the defeated powers. This difference not only continues inspite of the U.S.S.R. having joined in establishing the United Nations Organization on signing its Charter, but no substantial progress has

been made in the realization of the ideal embodied in that Charter, and most of its member nations have been divided into two power blocks engaged in carrying on a cold war under the leaderships of the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., and the members who do not support the one or the other and are interested in a thorough implementation of the terms of that Charter do not have sufficient influence with the two leading nations to be able to prevail upon them to come to an understanding between themselves on the vital points of difference.

Although both profess that their objective is the preservation of peace the actions of both the power blocks have in recent years sought to increase the tension of cold war, hostility and bitterness between the followers of the two kind of ideologies. The recent changes in the heads of the two governments have done nothing to lessen the chances of a third World War breaking out in the future. If it does not only will the nationals of the two countries have to pay the price for the uncompromising attitude of their political leaders but also of those whose governments are bound with them by treaties of alliance in war. Of the countries not yet so bound down, some may be roped in such as those who are so situated that they cannot afford to remain neutral for economic or commercial reasons others by promises of protection from molestation by the other party, and still others by offers to purchase their surplus products at exorbitant prices and so on. The people as a whole of any country left to themselves would never vote by a majority in favour of its joining in any such war if a referendum were taken but cheerfully or regrettably they have to supply recruits for the national armies, submit to the destruction of their properties and bear the burden of higher prices.

consequent upon the greater demand for goods and the shortage of supply thereof, which are the natural consequences of a war on a large scale.

### REASON FOR TENSION

Here we pause to inquire why there should be so much enmity between the politicians of the two leading powers. The reason for it obviously is that while on the one hand the leading politicians of the USSR have been fired by a missionary zeal to destroy capitalism and establish a new social order based on the doctrine of Marxism as modified in its application to their union of states in all the countries of the world in which they have not yet succeeded in doing so during the regimes of Lenin and Stalin, they have for the fulfilment of that mission been openly or secretly assisting the persons dissatisfied with the old social order prevalent in those countries with advice and assistance of money and arms, with a view to enable them to rise in revolt against their governments whenever convenient and establish a new order of society based on the communist model. Their ideal appeals naturally to the people of the disgruntled and suffering working classes, because the tendency of the landlords and the capitalists is to draw out from them as much of the fruits of their labours as they can and the result of it is that the rich get richer, and the poor get poorer day by day. But if on the other hand the political power is in the hands of the representatives of the peasants and workers they can so regulate the production and distribution of wealth that both the intellectual and manual workers can remain free from want and fear of exploitation and may have opportunities to enjoy the good things of life which are at present denied to them.

### COMMUNISM AND CAPITALISM

That this is not a mere utopian ideal is proved by the practical examples of its realization in the U.S.S.R., during the regime of Stalin extending over a quarter of a century, at least in so far as it has brought there considerable material prosperity among the working classes. The large majorities of the people of the U.S.A. and of England, France and other European countries have an aversion for communism and they concentrate all their powers in resisting its growth in their own countries and in those under their political influence. They believe that the same object can be secured by legislative and administrative means, placing a curb on the rapacity of the landlords and capitalists instead of wiping them out altogether, and by so doing to raise the standard of living of the poorer classes in the industrially backward areas. Their governments are proud of their achievements in that direction in their respective countries and they utilize their surplus skill and wealth in rendering assistance to the backward countries within their reach. Their chief objection to the spread of the communist ideal in the countries outside the U.S.S.R. is that its realization there during the regime of Stalin has been achieved on establishing the totalitarian rule of a dictator, who like the Brahman of the Vedanta or the Sankara School, was "One without second," who could establish his supremacy and get it acknowledged by others on organizing a strong police force and a hawldering net of spies and on ruthlessly suppressing and in many cases exterminating all those who were suspected of going against his will, and who justified such terrorism on the principle that the end justified the means, howsoever damnable they may be from the individualistic moral standpoints.

because whatever he did was for the benefit of his nationals.

If the communists were sincere believers in the necessity of allowing the basic freedom of thought and action to each individual as the people's democracy must, 'they cannot justify the restraint on the public expression of an opinion contrary to that of the leader of the party (which the majority of the members usually accepts almost without demur) and their declaration of another party opposed to that in power as dangerous as its enemy. Much less can they justify the maintenance of huge standing armies for overawing other nations in peacetimes suppression of individual liberty, misdeeds of large slave labour camps, perpetual threat of severe consequences at the slightest offence against the State, and so on.

The true reason for America's taking steps against the spread of communism to as few countries as possible seems to be to prevent the number of nations subscribing to the same political ideology as of the USSR to such an extent as to constitute a menace to the security of the capitalist government of the USA itself. In fact the quarrel between the western and the eastern blocks and virtually between the governments of the USA and the USSR is about the leadership of the civilized nations of the world so that the leading country of either of the blocks may maintain its dominating position in commercial, industrial and political fields unchallenged by any other power.

#### SOCIALISM

In between these two political ideologies comes that of socialism, which is a sort of compromise between those two, because it does like communism want the lands and industries to be nationalized and the society in each nation to be reorganized on a classless basis but like humanism, it

does not favour a totalitarian or dictatorial form of government. It is yet not so widespread and favourably circumstanced anywhere to act as a third ideology claiming to oust the other two or any of them from the field, not even in England where for some years the socialist party was in power. Socialism has however a chance of gathering sufficient strength in course of time and becoming a dominating ideology of the world as a whole because it seeks to strike a golden mean between the two extremes and because we see that the forces of extremism are required to soften their idealistic rigor while being given a scope for their play in the world of physical reality.

We have seen that these three are the movements in the field for the reorganization of the social order all over the world. No country can remain unaffected by any one of them because politics and economics are allied subjects, and the progress of science in the western countries during the last two hundred years have placed so much power in the hands of the governments of the western countries whose inhabitants are so far-sighted, enterprising and skillful that there is no corner of this globe where one or the other of their races has not penetrated and influenced the political and economic life of others in an appreciable manner or making a penetrating study of the weaknesses inherent in their nature. That being so, no nation has remained unaffected by the dominating political and economic world forces in this age. Just as the youthful sage Rishyasringa of Ramayana fame could not remain untouched by the blandishments of the court esan sent by King Rama-pada in order to prevail upon him to leave his forest-home where his father had brought him up so guardedly till he grew up to full manhood that he did not know that there could be

in existence any human being other than the sages who lived in the same forest. Inspite of such political subjugation and economic impoverishment most of the nations of the Middle East and the Far East have been benefited a good deal mentally and intellectually by having come into contact with the enterprising and advanced western nations. Such benefits have opened their eyes to the real position in which they are at present, and while some of them have already acquired political independence and have been making serious efforts to come up to the level of the economically advanced nations with the co-operation of those very nations, others are still struggling to shake off their political bondage, with the sympathy and partial co-operation of some of the liberal-minded leaders.

#### PROGRESSIVE TREND

Looked at from the standpoint of philosophy the world is progressing towards the realization of a higher ideal than that of securing the freedom of a group of individuals inhabiting a particular geographical unit and having either a settled form of government espousing its cause or having within it persons capable of forming such a government if they get an opportunity to do so. It is quite proper that the individuals composing a nation should be expected to submit cheerfully to such restraints upon their individual liberty as the ruling power in its wisdom considers it essential to impose for the benefit of the ratio, as a whole.

The U.N.O. has been set up with the willing consent of the governments of sixty nations for the realization of a still higher ideal, namely, that of securing the freedom and peaceful life of the human beings as a whole and although none of the said nations is as yet prepared to submit to such restraints on the exercise of its

sovereign rights as that great organization may think fit to impose for the benefit of the human race, there may at some future date be an agreement amongst them as to the creation of a Super State or of a Federal State under the auspices of that organization wielding an authority conferred on it by a constitution mutually agreed upon. But even then the world will not have made a substantial progress towards the realization of the highest ideal of perfection, because the prevailing idea of the freedom of individuals, nations and of humanity as a whole is that there should be freedom from molestation from other individuals or nations or 'coup' of nations in the pursuit of one's ideal so conceived as not to come in the way of the pursuit of theirs by others, and an ideal can be high or low according to the means brought within the reach of the inhabitants of a country in order to raise or lower that which is traditionally prevalent.

#### VALUES OF PAST AND PRESENT

In the age preceding the discoveries of modern science and the composition and dissemination of knowledge of the secular type, the belief in the existence of a soul different from the physical body, of its accountability for its actions while in the embodied state and of God who dispensed justice on assigning values to them, acted as a great deterrent against unrestrained indulgence in sensual pleasures and as an incentive to the cultivation of the virtues of harmlessness, kindness, truthfulness, charity, straightforwardness, etc., in the case of the majority of the people of each country, because such a belief was being implanted in their minds from their very childhood, and the kind of education which was being imparted to the children then kept their conscience alive. Moreover there were comparatively fewer opportunities for sensual enjoyment and therefore generally

people remained contented with what they could honestly get.

The nature of the education now imparted to our children fills their brain with much more secular knowledge than what was possible to acquire before, but it does not develop in them a moral conscience creates a distaste for the knowledge derived from the works on religion and philosophy including psychology (in its etymological sense) and metaphysics, and an attachment towards the sense-objects and a greed for the means for securing them, namely, material possessions. This is an evil effect of the spread of the western type of civilization throughout all the civilized countries and deserves to be counteracted with a determined effort on the part of an organized body of religious thinkers of all such countries. The subject legitimately falls under the head of 'Education,' which is one of the subjects dealt with by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which has its headquarters in Paris.

The Parliament of Religions assembled at Rishikesh should, in my view, pass a resolution for taking adequate steps for checking this evil tendency of modern education and approach the authorities of that body presided over at present by the Vice-President of our Union and draw out a scheme for giving effect to that resolution through a Committee appointed for that purpose. If there is likely to be an opposition to it from some countries and therefore no possibility of that body taking the lead in that matter the religious thinkers assembled at Rishikesh should found a world-wide association for that purpose and implement its resolution through its central executive body and through its various branches which are to be established in all the civilized countries where it is possible to do so.

### SPIRITUAL EDUCATION

In order to make the proposal acceptable to the followers of all the major religions and also to the extreme followers of the modern "isms," who, like the Sankhyas, believe that all the events that occur in the universe and in the lives of individuals are explicable by the laws of science and can be foreseen and counteracted, if need be, and that therefore there is no necessity to believe in the existence of a supernatural and superhuman Power, and who go a step further and deny even the existence of a soul surviving death, I would propose to disseminate the knowledge of the Atman as it is contained in the Upanishads, that is to say, the Atman as being identical with all that comes within the range of our experience and yet transcending everything including the limitations of time, space and causality. It is also essential that the necessity of striving as best as one can for the rules of morality which are common to all the major religions of the world, should be disseminated on a wide scale, and the ideal of the evolution of a higher type of human beings, who would be better masters of the natural forces than the sensually weak ones that they are, should be cherished by mankind. There is nothing wrong in doing so, for they themselves justify, on the same ground, rendering social service by helping the poor and the disabled, the orphans and the destitutes with charitable gifts for founding hospitals, rest-houses, training centres, etc., which according to the tenets of all the higher religions, are the different ways of serving God, as He is manifest throughout the creation.

### REASON FOR TOLERANCE

Similarly, since modern people look upon religious rites as useless both because they are of doubtful value in terms of concrete results and involve

dependence upon specially trained priests who though out themselves free from the human weaknesses try to dominate over the laymen I would not give place to such rites as prescribed or recommended by the scriptures of any of the recognized religions but would at the same time insist upon those having no faith in their efficacy to be tolerant towards those who have because firstly there is no sound reason for denying to the latter the same kind of liberty of conscience which they themselves claim Secondly each science is occupied with the study of any one group of objects or natural phenomena by experiments on and observation of their behaviour under certain conditions and none has as yet undertaken the study of all the objects and phenomena in their entirety Thirdly however accurate and minute the instruments may be with the help whereof such study is made the conclusions drawn from it are based upon knowledge derived from the senses and it is an acknowledged fact that they present at any one time only a partial view of things and events which is likely to be proved wrong by the scientists of a later age

Fourthly science being concerned with the forms and movements as they appear on the surface and these being the products of ideas which precede them in their ultimate analysis and they and their source being incapable of being subjected to empirical tests the knowledge based upon such tests is true only in a limited relative sense and leaves the scope of metaphysics and philosophy unaffected This is a conclusion which is now shared by several advanced scientists of the present century Lastly science is concerned with the experience of the human consciousness in the waking state and leaves unconsidered the experience thereof in the states

dreaming and sound sleep let alone that in the state of complete self integration Samadhi which is the peculiar achievement of the Yogis and which the thing in themselves are realized as but the Consciousness itself in infinite varieties of forms and degrees of density of the ideas arising in itself and appearing to be distinct from it because of their formation and transformations which leave their primary sources unaffected

#### NEED FOR RIGHT KNOWLEDGE

The knowledge of the reality derived from the observation of the natural objects in their concrete forms seen in the waking state is therefore partial and evanescent Technology which is applied science has therefore the limited use of supplying better means of livelihood and material comforts which cannot touch man's inner being and so cannot serve to improve the moral and spiritual part of his nature But if carried to excess would on the contrary deteriorate it It is true that those who consider the symbol or idol itself as God and do not know Him as omnipresent and omnipotent are apt to lead a double hypocritical life but the way to put them right is to initiate them into the knowledge about His true nature as expounded in the scriptures of any of the higher religions in which they may have faith and to put them on the path to realize the truth which can be done through any of the media of knowledge and devotion accompanied by disinterested action and the practice of some Yogi exercises in the case of some persons

The knowledge about the true nature of the individual soul and the Supreme Soul or God acquired by the sages of the later part of the Vedic age and embodied in the Upanishads of that period is of the highest sort and has been acknowledged to be so even by some of the best thinkers of Europe and America like Schopenhauer

Madam Blavatsky, Mrs Besant Alacous Huxley, Paul Brunton and Emerson

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

It can be understood that what I recommend for world-wide acceptance is the principle that a model welfare state should recognize it to be one of its duties to raise the moral and spiritual level of its nationals and should discharge it by spending public money in disseminating the right knowledge amongst the common masses and the intelligentsia, and by providing facilities for such education of the youth of both the sexes through schools and colleges on a universal basis. For this purpose special treatises and text books may be required to be

prepared by qualified persons. The governments of the countries recognizing the above duty, and even the UNESCO, should encourage such persons to be engaged in such work by announcing awards and honoraria and make arrangements for the publication of such of their works when ready as may be approved by committees of experts, who should be prohibited from entering into competition. This is, of course, a tentative proposal, and so, I will consider my effort amply rewarded if it serves as the basis of discussion by an authoritative committee entrusted with the task of drawing out a plan which is likely to command fair measure of acceptance by all concerned.

## Vedanta—the Future Religion of the World

(*Sri Frem Johan Farma, Allahabad*)

According to the great practical Vedantin Swami Ramakrishna, Vedanta means the ultimate science—the science of the Soul.

'Vedanta' is the supreme source of spiritual knowledge. It is the quintessence of all that is best and highest in our ancient thought and philosophy. It not merely enables us to acquire a theoretical knowledge of the Spirit, but also helps us to experience, realize and attain the ultimate Reality. It is both a science and an art, and whether we call it a science of the Soul or the Spirit, or a science of religion, or a scientific Universal Religion, it must be distinguished from the ordinary idea of a religion based on dogmas. In so far as it gives a scientific exposition of our religious thought and aspirations, Vedanta alone can satisfy the requirements of the modern intellectual man, whom no religion based on mere dogmas can satisfy.

As a scientific religion, Vedanta alone holds the key to satisfy the yearnings of a scientifically trained intellect and quench its thirst for spiritual knowledge. As such it is now high time that we should proclaim it as the future religion of the world accord to its recognition it deserves and place it on the high pedestal due to it. It should be remembered that spirituality has been the greatest treasure and distinctive contribution of India to world culture and it is this that has kept our civilization surviving through ages.

More than half a century has gone by since Swami Vivekananda of blessed memory one of the greatest exponents of Vedanta that modern India has produced carried its message to the western world, and when he proclaimed and revealed its truths and achievements and explained the mysteries of the Spirit before the people of America, he took the entire intellectual

world as if by a storm. In one bound, India's ancient culture made a world conquest, and raised its achievements sky-high in the estimation of the world. The entire intellectual world was not only shaken by the storm, but it howed to do homage to that eternal philosophy which is the special heritage of this ancient land of ours—rightly called the Punya Bhumi or Tapobhumi.

### IS RELIGION FOR GOOD OR BAD?

No doubt, the rationalists and the so-called utilitarians among us, who swear by modern science, are quite justified in condemning religion on the ground that it has failed to do much good, if, indeed, it has not done a lot of harm to mankind. That man cannot live without religion is a fact too apparent to need any discussion. Aod yet, though all religions have taught men to be good, how many good men do we find in the world, and how little goodness has religion really imposed on man? Religion in the past has failed to allay the battle of life, in which the bestial instincts of man have been dominant and have been the deciding factor. It is even said that religion has shed more blood than all the wars.

It may be said to the credit of Buddhism that it is the only religion which has shed no blood and which has been acknowledgably the apex of world culture and human benevolence. But Buddhism, as taught by the Master—that comes from a living touch—has waned and the Buddhist teaching became too abstruse for the laity. The Master had taught the duty of selfless love and rewarded it with the bliss that he called Nirvana, i.e., the beatitude resulting from the paring of all desires. That was the path of self-realization through Karma Yoga as we may say in the language of Vedanta.

The conditions of life seen all round us

are such as to tend to debase and brutalize human nature and make us more and more materialistic in our outlook. Our knowledge of material sciences also teaches us that because animals and men have in the past made their advance through conflict the future concept of progress should be based on biological theories of life. This is what is called the materialistic view of life. All religions on the contrary, teach us that that view is wrong. Vedanta explains in a scientific way how the error is caused by 'Maya' or delusion and how all of us are victims of 'Maya'. Our conscience revolts against this materialistic concept of progress. It revolts because the soul within us is potentially divine. On the one hand, we are painfully conscious of the limitations of our body and mind, on the other we find a will power within us, and think we can direct our will everywhere. At one time we feel we are free, at another we feel we are not free. Vedanta teaches us that the soul within us is free, and that it is its freedom that proclaims itself every moment that we are free, whereas our intelligence like our body, is not free, as also our will-power.

### MAN'S HIGHEST DESTINY

The corner stone of the Vedantic teaching is that man's highest destiny is Self-realization. Vedanta explains scientifically what Self realization is, and how it can be attained by any man who cares to follow any of the tried and tested paths. The rules of treading the path leading to Self-realization require that one on the path should follow what all religions lay down as the higher way of life. But Vedanta alone gives us the why and the wherefore of others. It alone explains to us in a scientific manner why man cannot realize his destiny unless he effects a reform in what we may call evolution in his nature, so as to divinize it, and make it capable of

realizing and manifesting the divinity within Reason has its limitations and cannot explain the riddle of existence Professor A V Hill, F.R.S., says in his address delivered on July 23 1946, at the twenty-first anniversary of the British Institute of Philosophy on 'The need for Moral and Intellectual Leadership'

'Reason alone cannot ensure progress or even stability, employed by clever, wicked men for their own ends it may produce mistrust and hatred, conflict and disorder. Scientific invention and discovery, for example, are necessary to human progress, but used without ethical restraint they can propagate fear and facilitate destruction. Some factor additional to reason is necessary if the human race or at least if civilized man, is to survive.'

#### IMPERATIVE NEED OF TODAY

What the world needs today to establish world wide spirituality and to draw mankind away from a materialistic outlook is God men or spiritually advanced personalities, blessed with an intuitive vision, who can show us the way and can demonstrate by their conduct and way of living the fundamental assertions of all religions that there is a real underlying unity behind apparent diversity that while the unity is real all separateness or diversity is Maya or delusion, that while the forces of unselfishness and love are real and abiding, their opposites, all forms of selfishness, discord and hatred, are unreal and based on Maya or delusion. If these fundamental religious verities can not be established in a manner so as to be acceptable to our intellect, the cry of religion is a cry in the wilderness. Materialistic philosophy is based on direct observation of a grim struggle for existence which we see before us but which our religion repudiates by just calling it 'Lord's Lila' or "Maya". Unless they can prove their thesis, the religions will them-

selves be open to the criticism that their tenets are the product of a phantasy or "Maya". The materialists call it self-hypnosis of the religio-maniacs. Both cannot be true. The conflict between the two viewpoints is very real and substantial, and every rational man has got to face it. Indeed materialism is the antithesis of spirituality. It is just here that Vedanta comes to the rescue of all religions.

#### ASSESSMENT OF IDEALS

When we are agreed that the aim and end of human incarnation is the attainment of divinity or perfection, that self development for Self realization is the goal of human destiny, we will have to make an altogether new assessment of the values of life. All our ideas of good and evil, of essentials and non-essentials, of human happiness and human progress, will have to be revised. There has to be a revaluation of all kinds of ideals made by the growing intelligence and awakened conscience of the man of tomorrow, who would be imbued with an unquenchable thirst for all truth and especially for the so-called obscured knowledge of the Spirit. The scientifically trained intellect, if made pure, and consecrated to the quest of the spiritual truth, will then turn its searchlight into the dead and forgotten dogmas of religion now buried with the heap of religious scriptures and will then truly interpret the real Cosmic Plan and Purpose of the Divine Will.

When men are born into this world who are gifted with spiritual vision and are able to interpret the true harmonies of life and the complex processes by which the divine or creative action works its way through the cycles of births and rebirths towards the consummation of man's higher destiny, the mediocre people of today will then believe them, and will thus alone be prepared to retrace their steps from the

world of sense and master the first step of self control self discipline penance and sacrifice which the western civilization has so long ignored their very presence will resolve many doubts that beset our intellect and for which no amount of intellectual effort on our part can find a solution Then will people listen to the inner voice of conscience, and look to it as the guiding light which always points out the best course under the given circumstances, because it knows with the knowledge of our weaknesses, in what our good lies Then will people believe that the overcoming of passions is an ideal in itself Then will people appreciate the value of penance

Then will the true definition of virtue and vice be accepted in terms of that which leads towards or away from the attainment of the goal of Self realization or true spiritual vision Then all the researches of the founders of the various religions will be harmonized and their merit adjudged on scientific lines in terms of faith and virtue Thus will science come to the rescue of religion, and religions, thus coalescing into one synthetic and harmonious unity, would have saved science There will then be one religion established in the world, that of faith and worship, and there will be seen the largest order of men holding spiritual communion with one another Just as it is said that half

a dozen men made the Industrial Revolution, verily may it be that half a dozen such men of enlightened vision will transform the world and initiate humanity into the spiritual path away from the pursuit of mammon

Then we shall remember those periods of ancient India, of which history shows us glimpses through the Greeks who visited India about four hundred years before Christ In the accounts left by them, it is recorded that in those days the people of India were an ideal sort of people The Greeks say that the Hindus did not tell lies that women lived on terms of equality with men And they say, grand, wonderful universities in the mountains and forests existed all over the country They go on describing in glowing terms the material wealth of the land, and what are called faithlessness and impurity, they say were absolutely unknown The Greeks were charmed Similar accounts we find recorded by the Chinese travellers, Huen Tsang and Fahien Crime was negligible in this country, and judged by any standard India was an earthly paradise That state of progress was not achieved by India through conflict or competition, but by establishing the rule of Dharma or righteousness, based on the knowledge of the Truth which Vedanta proclaims Religion is another name for the path of righteousness

### GOODNESS

Sir Ernest Benn Goodness is the conquest over evil, not the absence of evil

Dr Arnold As there can be no goodness of life without goodness of principle, so neither can there be any goodness of principle without its being shown in goodness of life

Martineau To get good is animal, to do good is human, to be good is divine

Farrar Little self denials, little honesties little passing words of sympathy, little nameless acts of kindness, little silent victories over favourite temptations—these are the silent threads of gold which when woven together gleam out so brightly in the pattern of life that God approves

## Mother Worship

(Dr. T. M P Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D.)

[Professor of Philosophy, University of Madras]

There is an exquisite verse in the Svetasvatara Upanishad exquisitely both in form and meaning - which reads: 'Thou art woman, Thou art man; Thou art the lad, and the maiden, too. Thou art the old man who totters with a stick. Thou art born with thy face turned everywhere' In myriad forms God appears. In the gracefulness of women and in the strength of man, in the joy of youth and in the wisdom of age, the Divine Power manifests itself.

This is not all. It is God's Sakti that creates all things, sustains them and withdraws them unto itself. And as Power and the Possessor of Power are non-different, God Himself has often been conceived as She.

The Motherhood of God is a very old conception. Among the relics of ancient civilization are to be found images of the Mother Goddess. In one of the hymns of the Rig Veda, Sakti is described as residing in heaven and supporting the earth. In another passage the goddess Aditi (meaning the 'Boundless') is identified with all gods and all men, with 'whatever has been and whatever shall be'. In the Taittiriya Upanishad the teacher, while giving his final instruction to the pupil says 'Regard thy mother as a god'. In the Keopanishad a story is told of Indra, the King of the Devas who on account of the pride of power and victory, could not recognize God whom He appeared before him and had to receive wisdom from the Mother. "Thee in the same region of the sky, Ida came across a woman who was shooing brightly, Uma the daughter of Himavat. He asked Her 'What Spirit is this?' She replied 'It is Brahman'." And there are a host of minor Upanishads

which speak of Sakti as the highest Being, as the absolute Brahman, one without a second.

### MATRILATRY

A system of philosophy and a set of occult practices have been woven round Matrilatry or Mother-worship in India. And Saktism has been one of the potent forces for the spiritual regeneration of the Hindus, though in corrupt times and practised by infidels it has led to certain abuses. The Saktaas accept the Vedas as the basic scriptures and the Sakta Tantras as texts expounding the means to attain the goal set forth in the Vedas. As the Kamika Agama puts it, the Tantra is so called because it explains (Tanoti) in great detail knowledge concerning Taiiva (truth) and Mantra (mystic syllables) and because it saves (Tranat). Tantra is the saving knowledge, the craft which carries the soul safely to the port of freedom. It is wrong to regard the Tantras as books of necromancy, magic spells and mysterious formulae. They are open scriptures from which all persons without distinctions of caste, creed or colour may draw inspiration. They are primarily Sadhana Sastras, the teaching about the paths to perfection.

### ADVAITA IN SAKTISM

The metaphysical position of Advaita or non dualism is taken over by the Sakta as the foundational theme. Reality is one, and that is Satchidananda existence-consciousness-bliss. As Sir John Woodroffe points out, 'Sakta doctrine is a special presentation of the so called Monism, (Advaita i.e. 'not-two') and Sakta ritual, even in those condemned forms which have given rise to the abuses by which this scripture is most generally known, is a

practical application of it. The Saka subscribes without reservation to the view that ultimate Reality is one, of the nature of Pure Consciousness or Experience 'per se' and that it is the ground of the manifest universe which appears therem through Maya. But while the Advaita of Suka would regard this appearance as illusory, the Advaita of the Saka would consider it to be real. Maya in Saktism is not the indeterminable nescience that somehow illusorily manifests the world but real Power or Sakti identical with ultimate Reality, causing the origination, sustanion and destruction of the universe. Pure Consciousness as the unperturbed substrate (Nirguna Brahman) is Siva. The same R ality is the Creative Force or the 'else vital in Sakti. The Sammohana Tantra says 'Without Prakrti or Sakti the transmigratory world cannot be. Without Purusha or Siva true knowledge cannot be attained. Therefore both should be worshipped—the Mahakali and the Mahakala.' The Absolute in a word, is Siva Sakti, Man Woman, or God Power. It evolves into the world of finite existence, and yet does not cease to be what it is namely Pure Consciousness, Existence and Bliss. The individual soul or the Pasu jiva is none other than Siva. Through limitation it feels estranged, or sundered from its moorings. Through sublimation it is resolved along with the universe, into the unitary Consciousness which is perfect Bliss.

#### THE TRINITY

Popular religion has identified Sakti with Mahadevi (magna mater) the eternal Spouse of Siva and the adorable Sister of Narayana. But the Saktas realize that the Supreme Mother transcends the divine trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra. She is Durga or Power as Action (Kriya). She is Lakshmi or Power as Will (Icchha), She is Saraswati or Power as Knowledge (Jnana).

For the first three days of Navaratri She is worshipped as Durga, for the second three days as Lakshmi, and for the last three days as Saraswati. And on the tenth day She is adored as Rajarajeswari the Queen Mother transcending the triple aspects that go to constitute the changing world.

#### CREATION AND DESTRUCTION

A unique feature of Hinduism, in general, and of Saktism, in particular, is that the power of destruction are not delegated to Satan standing opposite and alien to God. The Mother not only creates but also destroys. Death loses all its horror when it is regarded as a portal to a new life. Destruction is no destruction when it leads to a fresh mode of existence. Just as creation is an expression of the divine Power, so too is destruction. Hence the Saka conceives of the Mother both as Tripurasundari, the beautiful creatrix and as the terrific Kali, the dark Goddess, who revels in the dance of death. Swami Vivekananda captured the spirit of the Saka in a hymn to Kali where he sings

"Come, Mother, come !  
For Terror is Thy name,  
Death is in Thy breath  
And every shaking step  
Destroys a world for ever,  
Thou Time, the All-Destroyer!  
Come, O Mother, come !"

#### SYMBOL OF BRAHMAN

It is often criticized that Saktism is 'a doctrine teaching the primacy of the Female and thus fit only for suffragette monists,' that it is 'a mere feminization of orthodox Vedanta.' That this criticism is pointless will be evident when one understands the implications of the Saka-doctrine. It is no more wrong to call God Mother than to call Him Father. From the empirical point of view, both the principles, static and dynamic, male and female, are needed for

explaining world creation The Sakti lays the emphasis on the female because, while the man's part in procreation is fleeting and momentary, the woman's part is more abiding and intimate The Supreme Mother sacrifices Herself to become the world And so, from this point of view, the Mother conception is more important than the Fatherhood of God At the same time the Saka knows well that from the transcendental standpoint the distinctions

of sex have no application to the Absolute The Sanskrit word Matri (in English 'Mother') is both feminine and masculine The Mahakala Samhita addresses the Mother thus in a hymn "Thou art neither girl, nor maid nor old Indeed, Thou art neither female, nor male, nor neuter Thou art inconceivable immeasurable Power, the Being of all which exists, void of all duality, the Supreme Brahman attainable only through illumination or wisdom

## Sakti in Creation

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

As long as we live and move in the universe, we are aware of a Power or Sakti that sustains and motivates it If we think of what the universe itself is we shall find that it is not as it at first appears When we speak of the universe, we speak of the beings that inhabit and constitute it—men, birds, beasts, plants and minerals We find the universe consisting of tangible and also intangible things Not only do we find concrete matter but also such things as heat, light, sound, magnetism and electricity Nay, more we find in the universe hatred, fear, avice, greed, jealousy, etc., and also love, mercy, compassion, charity, generosity, etc We also find in the universe the sense of right and wrong, the sense of the beautiful and the sense of the true and the good We speak of some things as perishable and others as imperishable When we do so, we mean that some things go out of our sight and some do not In truth, what looks like matter is really found to be energy or force

Now it is possible to group all these and arrange them in such a way that our view of the universe may be clear and also complete That has been done by our ancients who have given us the Sankhya and Yoga philosophies They have started from the five primordial elements which they call



Panch Bhutas viz., Prithivi or earth, Apas or water, Tejas or fire, Vayu or wind and Akasa or ether The whole of creation in the concrete forms is made of the combinations in different proportions of these five elements Beyond these "elements," there are the five Tanmatras corresponding to the five elements They are Sahda (sound), Sparsa (sense of touch), Rupa (form), Rasa (taste)

and Gandha (smell)

Having disposed of the concrete part of creation in this fashion our ancients have dealt with the equipment found in individual Jivas which enables them to recognize and make use of these concrete objects in the universe This equipment

imperishable—the Amsa or partial manifestation of the Supreme Purusha. This is not the Advaitin's view; but when we are discussing the universe, we are in the region of duality and not of Advaita. The Jivas, therefore, can be spoken of as Amsas or fractions. Each Jiva creates for itself its own mind, its own Indriyas and its own shape, making use of the five Bhutas. That is why each person is different from every other in facial features, mental outlook and spiritual level.

Now it is the Jiva which makes use of its equipment in the form of body, mind and Indriyas for experiencing pain and pleasure and also for finally liberating itself from the contact with the universe. We have seen that the universe itself is only Sakti, variously called as Pradhana, Prakriti, or Aliqya. Let us now enquire, in brief, into how this Sakti manifests itself through the different objects in creation.

#### MANIFESTATION OF SAKTI

We shall start from the mineral kingdom. If we dissolve common salt and copper sulphate in water to the saturation point of each and leave the solution undisturbed for a few days we shall find that common salt crystals and copper sulphate crystals are deposited in the bottom. Now, who gave the brain to the common salt particles to separate themselves from the copper sulphate particles and form common salt crystals? The answer is that it is the "mineral Buddhi" (or mind)—the creation of the Jiva embodied in the mineral (common salt or copper sulphate)—that gave the order for the arrangement of the particles in that particular manner. That "mineral Buddhi" is the universally prevalent Sakti or Prakriti as it manifests itself through the mineral. In the case of the formation of the crystals, we have the Sakti showing itself as cohesion. But in the mineral world we have Sakti manifesting itself as heat, light, sound,

magnetism and electricity. The highest form in which it shows itself is as electricity. We can call this manifestation of Sakti by the name of Bhuta Sakti for the reason that it is revealed by the things made up of the Pancha Bhutas.

Passing on to the plant world, we notice that the Sakti shows itself in a higher degree. The plant has the power of taking in food through water, etc., and it consequently grows. There we see life or Prana. This Sakti has to be called Prana Sakti because it is different from electricity. It is not merely proton and electron. We often see big plants—usually banyan plants—growing on the top of temple walls and breaking those stone walls. The life energy in the growing plant is greater and more powerful than the electron energy in the stone wall. That manifestation of the cosmic Sakti through plants may be called Prana Sakti.

If we now go to the animal world, we shall find that animals have a still higher form of energy. They have got the mind which can find out relations to a certain extent—between cause and effect, and which can have a more acute sense of pain and pleasure. The animal mind will also show will power. This is Manosakti. It is superior in kind and not merely in degree to the Prana Sakti of the plant. Otherwise, animals cannot even eat plants; for if the Prana Sakti were not inferior, it would resist the animal's attack on it when the animal feeds on the plant. As against the Manosakti of the animal, the Prana Sakti of the plant is nowhere.

#### ATMA SAKTI

Above the ordinary animal stands man. He has not merely discrimination but also the aesthetic and the ethical sense. In other words, he has the full use of the intellectual, emotional and volitional powers. That is why he stands far above the animal. His Sakti may be spoken of

as the Jiva Sakti, because the Jiva embodied in a human being makes full use of the Manas and the Indriyas.

Beyond the ordinary Jiva Sakti, which every human being has, there is the special Sakti which we find in saints who are able to have full control of their minds. The great Yogi who is expert in Chitta Vritti Nirodha, i.e., the control of the modifications of the mind has what we may call Atma Sakti, because when he has cleared the mind of its agitations, it receives the

energy of the Atman residing in his body. This is the highest form of Sakti which man, as man can aspire for.

When the perfect man lays down his body, he is free to remain apart from the Paramatman or to merge himself in it. If he chooses to remain separate, he will be rendering service to the different orders of beings in the universe. In doing so, they will be making use of Chit Sakti (which is also Atma Sakti) and thus helping God in the discharge of His functions.

## *Yoga—an Ideal, Universal Religion*

(*Yogiraj Sri Aldo Latognini, Mexico*)



The synthesis of the Yoga principles and their practice in the West, which was originally introduced by Swami Vivekananda at the 1891 Parliament of Religions in Chicago, and by his many lectures following his address there was indeed a Revelation, and a much needed one.

It came at a very opportune and cosmically startling time, as every great Revelation usually comes. Just in those two years, 1891 and 1892 there was then an unknown planetary conjunction. This conjunction was of the two outermost planets of our Solar System Pluto and Neptune, which comes about every five hundred years—a conjunction which unseen was then exactly in three successive times in those very degree of the Sidereal Zodiac (the middle of the Taurus constellation marked by the star Aldebaran) where the Vernal Equinox (Ayana) was at the time of the generally acknowledged beginning of the Kali Yuga almost exactly five thousand years ago.

Thereafter, slowly, rather furtively, but surely, chiefly by means of books and pamphlets—some of which rather misrepresented it—Yoga had made its way steadily in the West while at the same time it has had a very needed reawakening in its very native soil the Bharatavarsha. Among those who have done most to spread this knowledge in an objective, erudite way, we must remember the late Sir John Woodroffe. He has translated several rare Tantric texts, together with his monumental work, *The Serpent Power*, to which however, he attributed so little importance as not to mention there his own name!

But, at the same time especially during the 30 years previous to the publication of the above mentioned work, Yoga has had many detractors and attacks by several occult leaders who may have thought sincerely its practice unapt for western people. Even learned Theosophists, who should have known better about Yoga, have lent their hand to its misunderstanding much more than contributing to its true knowledge. Particularly misleading was the treatise on the Seven Chakras, published by the Rev Leadbeater,

which has been severely and justly criticized for the several plain errors committed there, as also for his other misleading hints to several points of the Yoga practice.

After the lead taken by Sir John Woodroffe, many, especially among Indians, were encouraged to give more details on the Yoga postures,—which even Vivekananda did not recommend to the Westerners—and the technique of Pranayama, which gradually has led to the present day world-wide awakening. Still that prejudice of the unfitness of Yoga practice, generally for the western people, has continued to hold its sway. But a very imaginative and well-meaning Hindu teacher, the late lamented Paramahansa Yogananda, has devised and widely taught a new, elaborate adaptation of the Eastern Yoga to the West, without however thus quenching the thirst for genuine, simple Yoga practice. Yet even among his own disciples many have become enthusiastic adepts of the Yoga postures, which were not directly taught, nor originally intended to be taught, but acquired by them on their own initiative.

One of the reasons of this universal quest for Yoga—simple, pure, true Yoga—which we may find in both the Americas just as in Europe and Africa, may be explained by the fact that among those Westerners who have been first and most interested in Yoga, this was the rebirth of a desire (Samakara) born in some previous life in an Indian body. But, obviously, this is only a partial explanation even though there are now many millions of formerly ancient Hindus in Western bodies.

There is, besides, and behind it, the fact that the hour of Yoga—and the hour for a much needed social and ideally universal re-orientation—has now come for the West, and rather for the whole world indeed.

Most wise and foreseeing have therefore been such Teachers, as our own revered Swami Sivananda, who have taken their stand firmly at the most ancient and venerable and yet, simple, pure and true Yoga teachings, without any outdated garment or admixture. They are teaching only what have come down uninterruptedly from Guru to Chela (disciple) through many thousands of years. They have taken their stand upon Eternity, as their mental feet are firmly placed in the eternal Truth, the immutable basis of every revelation in every time. So their work shall not be fleeting as it is inevitable for the many new innovations in this field, since only Truth will stand forever and ultimately win.

So, after Ramakrishna who was perhaps a Yogi by instinct more than by reflection, study and steady practice we must certainly place Swami Sivananda as foremost among the Yogi teachers and apostles of this century. He has enlivened the Yoga practice in his own country, and has helped to spread it abroad to a degree that no one previously did, because he has not been afraid—as others have been—to teach in its wholesome integrity the precious Message of Yoga irrespective of nationality, or religion or country.

Now, is Yoga a Religion? In the fundamental sense of the word—from the Latin verb re-liga re “to bind, join, unite,” and even from lega re “to legitimate, transmit”—it certainly is. Nothing is more apt, direct and proficient than its discipline to rejoin and unite one with one’s Divine Source or Being, i.e., Jivatma with Paramatma, and nothing more or less can be the true essence and the real finality in any religion.

As any other true religion, Yoga has also a basic and ideal ethical code, which consists of just ten commandments—the five Yamas and the five Niyamas, or, according to some other enumeration, ten of each, twenty in all. Chief among them are Ahimsa and Satya—"not to harm any living being, and veracity." And they are the basis of both harmonious social life and individual happiness and progress.

But, very different from all other religions and more especially Christianity, it has no dogmas, no creed, and hardly may he said to have a book, pointing to a unique revelation. It has no banishment, no outcastes, no condemnation for those who may be wrong or who may find themselves on a different path. Everyone who earnestly endeavours to follow its rules and practices is admitted, and may eventually find the Way to Blissedness and the supreme Liberation, even if one had been previously "the greatest of sinners."

The study of the scriptures is encouraged, and rather ordained, as one of the ten basic rules. But in this wide term, everything which appears to be the outcome and the record of a spiritual Experience, is especially recommended for study. So not only the Vedas, the Upanishads and other Hindu Shastras, but also the Christian and Hebrew Bibles, the Zoroastrian Gathas, the Koran and the Buddha's teachings, may be studied and followed, in so far as they do not contradict the simple basic rules, and in no far as one may find in them a Living Inspiration.

In Yoga, Viveka or spiritual discrimination always remains the basic qualification of any progress, and one must discern and judge for one self what is the true outcome of a pure and genuine spiritual Experience, and what is a supposition of the erring human mind, or what may be of the deepest

value in an apparently untrue teaching.

So, understanding and individual experience are, in every case, of the foremost importance. These only are to be considered as final, even if they go against any Shastra, or recorded teaching. But, they are not simple, ordinary thoughts "as it strikes one," rather, they are the outcome of *disciplined thought*, and its gradual *overcoming*, since the supreme Experience or Samadhi is pure Consciousness free from thought. No less, than, it is the goal of Yoga.

As to books we have indeed the Patanjali Sutras and the other Yoga-Shastras, the Upaishads proper, and the Bhagavad Gita. But none of these precious writings should be considered as a Bible, something of the kind of a supreme final authority. They are no less valuable than any Bible, but they are only aids and props. Only practice and individual experience are to be considered as final and supreme. Both God and Truth should be directly perceived as one by the pure consciousness. Having overcome the realm of thought one becomes one with the Reality. So, books and teachings only help one along the spiritual Path.

No Religion is more catholic than Yoga, and none is more exacting. There is freedom at every one of its steps, since it is the Path to Liberation from Illusion or Maya, error, evil, in its many forms, even death and eventually rebirth, and it is freedom *within the rules* of perfect Living, the freedom of the Overcomer. At the same time, an utmost faithfulness to practice and vows is ordained, since the Path is to be trodden, step by step.

Practice is the simple, living ritual of this wonderful Religion—practice in the discipline of the body and in the care of

its needs and cleanliness, practice in the simple rules of a carefree life, practice in the mastering of the breath—slowing and extending its rhythm in harmony with the Cosmic Force, and practice in the control of thought, through progressive meditation, its gradual restraining, purposeful direction, and final overcoming.

To those who are accustomed to the Christian genuflexions and the still more complicated gestures of the Mohammedan, the Yoga Asanas may appear, at first sight, both more difficult and less becoming to prayer and communion with God, but when we remember that God is to be "enthroned in man," and that the human body is His truest living temple, no less than the vault of the sky, or of a church, or any image in which Divinity may be symbolized, we come to see that the complete, concentrated坐着 in Siddhasana is the best posture for true and direct communion with God. As in everything indeed, Yoga is seeking directness above all. If God is within and He is to be experienced rather from the summit of the head than from that of the sky, or from a temple what could be better than the meditative Yoga postures?

Yoga Asanas favour and cultivate stillness, together with an utmost flexibility of the body. Because God is omnipresent, and thus equal in all directions, the practice of the Divine Presence may equally be done in the inverted posture of Sirshasana, and in the complete bowing and restraining of breath in Paschimottanasana. In every case, the stillness of the body and of the mind are the required conditions.

As to true prayer, which is the living essence of Religion, it is certainly not so much the seeking of some special favour, nor to be heard and understood by the very Omnipotent, as it is to find its way, and

commune with It, and mould our own thought and will in harmony with the Cosmic will. Both the primitive way of an outer sacrifice and the verbose claiming of a favour should be overcome by the complete stillness of body and mind in the remembrance of His Presence, and in the simple uttering of His mystical name through every breath.

Nothing therefore, is more simple, or at and potentially universal than Yoga in its Eight Limbs. Not only is it the simplest and most direct religion, but equally an aid and a complement to every other religious practice. None need be converted to Yoga abdicating his own creed or the religion of his father. He may keep his religion and be faithful to its commandments if he finds comfort and the need of so doing, and at the same time begin the practice of Yoga as an aid to it. Here its universality becomes apparent, since it is leading directly, in a sort of scientific, methodical way, to the very supreme Goal of every religion. So the difference between Yoga and every other religion is the same as between Science and Empiricism.

Is not Yoga the same way pointed by the Buddha in his Eightfold Path to Blessedness and by the Christ in the Bible? "But the hour comes, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and Truth, for the Father seeks such to worship Him. God is Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in Truth" (John 4:23-24).

We know very well that the Buddha sought to simplify the Yoga Path by evolving the Eightfold Path of rightness such as right knowledge, right livelihood and so on, and that Jesus the Christ only gave some general rules of conduct and prayer for all people, apart from any practice or ritualism. But, unfortunately, today ritualism is the dominant factor in most religions.

However there is no utterance of either the Buddha or the Christ which is at variance with the Yoga and its teaching or practice And the Yoga practically leads to that very Ble sedness or Nirvana which was the foremost aim of the Buddha and to the perfection even as your heavenly Father is perfect of which Jesus spoke no less than the Kingdom of Heaven or the

Supermind which comes not with reason but which is within us

So Yoga which comes now to the fore under the auspicious conjunction of Saturn and Neptune with Chitra may be considered either as an aid a complement and a substitute for Religion an Ideal Universal Religion indeed

## Potentialities of Hindu Philosophy

(*Sri Chakravarti Rajagopal chari*)

Many earnest men from foreign lands have studied Hindu religious philosophy and some of them have shown a measure of understanding that is truly surprising when one remembers the great difference in religion and tradition between these scholars and their subject of study In spite of their talents this difference in milieu is a real and great handicap in the way of just appreciation

As for our own savants the trouble has always been that one is apt to fail to see the wood for the trees The chief aim of my present exposition will be to bring the civic aspect of Hindu philosophy into prominence I claim that the philosophy of Hinduism is particularly suited to create and shape a conscience for the effective performance of these civic obligations without which there can be no progress in modern times Secondly I claim that no religious philosophy is so consistent with modern scientific knowledge as that which forms the common fundamental of the worship of the Almighty in India and this is important as there can be no normality or psychological well being with inconsistencies prevailing between religious practice and accepted knowledge Last but not

least I wish to emphasize that the catholicity that lies at the root of Hindu philosophy makes it specially suitable for creating conditions in the present day world for ordered advance in the way of general happiness

If it is thought that the history of civilization in India has failed to prove my position in respect of Hindu philosophy and civic conscience I may submit that the fault lies in the latter day decline of devotion to that philosophy and not in the philosophy itself The deterioration in recent centuries of living devotion to the philosophy to which people have continued to give external allegiance was certainly due to political conditions which interrupted the natural link between creed and life We have an opportunity now to test the validity of all the civic claims I have made for the Vedanta philosophy for now we have conditions and opportunities conducive to shape our daily life on the basis of religious conviction

### PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE

[It is my firm belief that Vedanta as conceived and developed in ancient India is a faith particularly suitable for modern times Indeed it is my conviction that it is more consistent with the discipline

and the knowledge that have come to stay in the world through science than most other religious philosophies and beliefs, and for that reason it is more suitable for wholehearted adoption and practice today than ever before.

Other religions are more or less based on fear—that is on the punishment that may be inflicted by a supreme authority. Some phases of Hindu religion that have survived Vedanta may seem to suffer from this common frailty of dependence on what may be called the postulate on monarchic rule. But it may be generally and truly stated that Hindu philosophy rests more on the rule of law than on the authority of a ruler—on law as understood by natural philosophy not authoritarian law enunciated by law making bodies for execution by courts.

We read in chapter IX of the Bhagavad Gita verses 4 to 10 that all beings abide in God but He stands apart from them. He is the origin and the support of beings yet He stands apart from them. He uses Nature and creates again and again all this multitude of beings keeping them completely dependent on Nature. It is a part of His scheme of sovereignty that Nature brings forth the moving and unmoving and in consequence of it the world evolves. A study of the Upanishads will show that the universe is recognized therein as the result of a gradual unfolding of the creative power inherent in the primordial substance. It is a remarkable achievement of intellect and imagination if it would not be incorrect to call it inspiration—that the rule of law as known in science was anticipated in the Hindu scriptures. It would not be wrong even to claim that the philosophy of Hinduism anticipated the basic theories of biology and physics. The very approach to things that one can read in the Upanishads is a

scientific approach. There is constant insistence on adherence to truth and investigation. Hindu faith does not rest on the unusual or the miraculous but is linked to unchangeable Law. Religions running counter to the discipline of physical science and demanding compartmental loyalty can only lead to hypocrisy. My claim is that Hindu philosophy steers clear of this.

#### PHILOSOPHY AND MODERN ECONOMY

Just as Vedanta anticipated the basic ideas of science in respect of evolution and prepared the ground for harmonizing religion with science, so also the Hindus saw long ago that the profit motive—the civic right of unrestricted competition was inconsistent with human progress. The Hindu scripture lays down in clear and emphatic terms the doctrine of work for the sake of society according to capacity and not for profit. The Gita also stresses also on what is a necessary corollary of this, the equal dignity of every form of labour. It furnishes the motive power for the altruistic performance of work by elevating it to the level of religious worship and piety. This is what is known by the oft repeated but I fear inadequately understood term Karma Yoga. It is not profit but as an offering to God that one is asked to work. If a man is devoted to his particular duties and performs them he wins Beatitude. When a man performs his proper duty he worships God from whom the world issued and by whom all that we see is pervaded. It is better for one to do imperfectly the duties that fall to his lot than to do those of others perfectly. One should not abandon one's natural duty even if evils seem to adhere there to. Every human activity involves some evil as fire carries smoke. He who works with mind detached and free from selfish longings is a real Sanyasi. In these terms the Gita explains true renunciation.

The Gita thus supplies the spiritual foundation necessary for the new economy that is everywhere sought to be installed in the modern world in place of what has been found completely inadequate, namely, the motive of private profit. Yet these very texts which I have just now commended and rendered into English have lent themselves in the hands of ignorant critics to the interpretation that the verses are an apology for selfish preservation of privileges. Perversity and prejudice can convert elixir into poison.

#### REGULATED ECONOMY AND RELIGION

In modern conditions wherein coalition standards of living have come to stay and increased population has created very difficult problems the common-weal must have the dominant claim over the activities of every individual, and people must govern themselves and live under a regulated economy. This regulation causes widespread and deeply-felt pain. It hurts because it goes against the instinctive desire in the individual to be free. Therefore, regulation should be so designed as not completely to stifle individual liberty and initiative and the joy that flows therefrom. The pain of a regulated economy is due to the fact that the regulation comes from outside, imposed by an external authority. Properly designed and placed on a spiritual basis, a regulated economy need not be inconsistent with individual satisfaction and individual zeal. The restraints and habits of mind that are required to be developed for altruistic action, must flow from faith and inner conviction. Community-effort is not the sumtotal of individual effort and it cannot be brought into being unless individuals work with zeal, deriving joy therefrom. Joy can only be in the individual because a corporation as such, has no feelings. We should, therefore, find and furnish a com-

pelling motive to the individual, a motive not of fear but of joy. I claim that religion is a necessary and appropriate force for effective and just regulation. It is only a spiritual faith and force that can make men work and enable them to find pleasure in working for the common-weal, and this is the very doctrine of life that forms the kernel of Hindu religious thought that was preached so long ago in the Gita.

There is hardly anyone who now believes that the old scheme of life which gave prosperity to Europe in the nineteenth century has now any validity. Individual competition has to give place to regulated co-operative economy in varying degrees of pace in the several departments of life. This new economy, not based on self-interest but on something else, almost the opposite of it, calls for a spiritual and cultural basis, contra-distinguished from a material selfish basis. Communism may talk of a materialist dialectic and claim success. But it is forgotten that revolution and misfortune and widespread trouble produce a state of mind which temporarily functions like spiritual faith. Where a new order of non-competitive economy has in any measure succeeded, it is due to the fact that what is equivalent to a spiritual upheaval resulted from widespread revolution or war, which enabled the ruling out of the motive of selfishness. This was a good enough, temporary substitute for religion. But it cannot last for all time.

The prosperity that undoubtedly resulted in Europe from the economy of private enterprise and competition, necessarily carried with it inequality of distribution. The very power of that economy was derived from difference as power is derived from a fall of water. Some people had to live in aquaducts, maybe in the same country or maybe elsewhere—the latter was easier wherever it was possible—in order that

organism. It is made up of many individuals who can never get rid of individuality and what flows from it. We may develop altruism by several means but we can never wholly do away with the individual. If this is accepted as correct how then shall we keep the individual fully alive in spirit and in action, and yet make individual activity truly subservient to the general interest? The claim I put forward is that the Gita code of conduct which is organically connected with the philosophy of the Upanishads gives the answer. The secret lies in the substitution of the compulsion and vigilance of the State by a religion that develops an inner law more vigilant than the eye of spies and more effective than the arm of external law.

Now I come to a feature of Hinduism that is unique among all the religions of the world ancient and modern, viz., its specific and positive doctrine of catholicity. The Hindu tradition prescribes that it is not open to any Hindu, whatever the name and mental image of the Supreme Being he may use for his own devotional exercises, to deny the gods that others worship. He can praise the name and raise the image of his choice to the highest but he cannot deny the divinity or the truth of the God of other denominations. This unshaken tradition of Hinduism makes it possible for pious fervour to operate on conscience and spirit without disturbing the peace of community life in a composite world. It makes Hindu religious thought as modern in suitability as it is ancient in conception and development. This unique and all-important aspect of Hinduism is emphasized in several important and oft-quoted verses in chapters IV, VII and IX of the Gita. Forms of worship may differ, but all lead to God. In whatsoever way men approach God, the Gita emphatically lays down that God blesses them. Whatever the

path that men may take in worship it assures us they reach God. The Gita teaching, of course, refers to the unity of the goal of all the forms of worship that were prevalent at the time. But the doctrine is stated in such wide terms and so broadbased on essential principle as to be applicable to every variety of religion. When one contemplates how the Hindu seers so clearly and so long ago saw the truth that justifies his catholicity, one cannot but be lost in wonderment and reverent admiration. This, what I may call, is the brightest jewel in our inheritance,—a teaching of the highest value for peace and progress and for the world's happiness and spiritual advancement.

All this may be accepted but the sceptic may ask "What about renunciation? What about Karma? How can Hinduism which preaches Sanyas and Fatalism be suitable for an age wherein hard work and the due performance of civic duties are so essential?" I shall seek to deal with these queries. First, let me state definitely that it is not the teaching of Vedanta that men should renounce activities and become anchorites. Vedanta demands renunciation but the renunciation is different from what is referred to in the argument against the suitability of Hinduism for the modern citizen. It is renunciation of false values, renunciation of attachment that the Vedanta wants in its votaries. What is preached in the Vedanta is enlightened and true evaluation of essentials and a spirit of detachment. And this is explained and reiterated in the Gita quite as if this very query raised now had specifically been put to Sri Krishna. Buddhi and Asanga are insisted on, not Sanyas. Indeed, the performance of tasks with detachment is the lesson that is driven into the reader in every chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. It is not necessary to quote passages. There is no room whatsoever for doubt on this head.

The Upanishads and the Gita want men to get rid of the impediment to true social co-operation, viz., the desire for pleasure and pleasurable sensations. It is this desire that leads to error, anger, confusion of mind and pain and grief. The ideal citizen should perform his tasks and duties with detachment. His activities should be in the general interest, not for selfish gain. This is the great teaching of the Gita that has justly made it as famous in modern times as it is classic in the Vedic tradition. Out of the Upanishadic teaching and its doctrine of the ultimate Reality, the modern citizen can derive a fearlessness of spirit which, added to the detachment and righteous execution of duties preached by the Gita, could make of every citizen a veritable giant in the service of society. The resolution and fearlessness that characterized Mahatma Gandhi's long, strenuous and dedicated life were inspired by this philosophy and this religion. This single illustration from recent history is perhaps more convincing than hours of argument.

### KARMA

Coming to Karma—the doctrine that makes Hinduism what it is—it is nothing but the great law of cause and effect in things spiritual. You cannot in the material or the psychological world get rid of the effects of what you do. And as the body is not the whole of the matter, but there is an immortal Spirit dwelling in and making the human being what he is, death does not end the chain of sequence. The working agent, the Spirit in the body, does not and cannot die with the body. He shapes himself moment by moment by his activities—mental or physical. At death he does not disappear into nothing but enters a new tenement which he has built for himself by his life activities. This is Hinduism. You may accept it or reject it and search for other theories. But if accepted, the Hind

theory of Karma gives the highest sense of responsibility to the citizen. No explanation or theory in regard to the ultimate nature and cause of things can be made which against all logical difficulties. Our knowledge is necessarily finite and we cannot discover and resolve the mysteries of infinity. On the assumption of the soul as the basis of personality, it can be claimed that no theory can be formulated more in harmony with known laws of nature than the Hindu doctrine of Karma. It is the application in the moral sphere of the law of conservation of energy as established by the physicists. Indeed both the physicist's law and the doctrine of Karma may be invoked upon as parts of the same universal law.

It is wrong to think of Karma in terms of what may be facetiously called its western half-brother Fatalism. Destiny as taught in Vedanta does not involve an unscientific attitude towards natural laws or a loss of faith in human effort, which is Fatalism. Karma is just the unalterable law of effect following cause. Newton put it in clear terms with respect to physical momentum. The Vedanta puts it down for the millions of the soul. Is it possible to do a thing and escape its consequences? One cannot expect something to happen unless some thing else appropriate to produce that result must have been done. Given a certain thought or act, the natural result cannot be escaped.

This is Karma. Is it not well for citizens to see this truth, to accept it as a binding doctrine and perform their tasks and duties and avoid the prohibitions, not in fear of the magistrate, but remembering this inescapable law?

### CHARTER OF FREEDOM

The law of Karma does not do away with free will and the virtue of initiative or endeavour. On the contrary, it is the truest

charter of freedom and initiative. The thoughts you entertain the words you choose to speak the acts you do, the restraints you exercise on yourself, all these produce their full fruit. No effort goes for nought. If no one can be robbed of the fruits of his labour is it not true freedom? There cannot be any better freedom in the world for man than that his future is entirely in his hands. The very meaning of the word Karma is work. It is the law of work that is laid down in Vedanta not a doctrine of negation of human effort. *Vicha* is law, not blind Fate.

### GRACE

Need I say anything more to demonstrate that the doctrine of Karma is as far from Fatalism as poles are apart. Man evolves himself according to his thoughts and actions and even death does not terminate the opportunity for remedy and progress. This is Hinduism. Pious Christians and Vaishnavites may here feel a doubt. If Karma is inescapable and sin must go through what it has unfortunately earned is there no room then for Grace in Hinduism? Yes, there is. Grace comes through penitence and penitence is human effort and victorious effort. Grace is not the caprice of the Lord. When penitence has truly been achieved by the soul it so completely changes the heart of the penitent that he attributes it to the caprice of the Lord. But that is only one of the beauties of the joy of penitence. It does not alter the law of Karma. Penitence is an act that has its full reward like any other act. Penitence is the victory of the soul in its battle against evil, and the conquering soul feels the victory contemporaneously with the battle itself. It is a rapturous combination of the pain of battle and the joy of victory. Sin is worked out in Karma through true sorrow and austerities undergone by the sinner. There is no contradic-

tion between the doctrines of Grace and of Karma.

### IMPROVEMENT OF THE HUMAN RACE

Some questions may be asked here. Supposing one accepts the doctrine of re-birth what good is it however to be told that something will be fruitful in a future birth wherein we shall have no memories of the past? How can it foster or further individual initiative or endeavour? Why should I labour or renounce or rench my present joy for one who will come to exist in another birth with whom you identify me but which identity is not felt by me now, nor is going to be felt then? Thus may the pleasure-seeker pose his difficulty. The answer is thus

Friend, do you not derive a joy in doing the right thing apart from its effects or your own advantage? The joy of right conduct is inherent in human nature. All recorded and unrecorded experience confirms this for everyone big and small. Members of a family or of a village intuitively work for one another and derive pleasure therefrom. Though they may obtain no personal advantage from it, they are immensely happy when they do it. People are not indifferent to the good of their village or their country. The joy of right conduct and of mutual helpfulness is as real as the universal force of attraction that the men of science call by the name of gravitation. The great and Universal One has become many and the many seek to become One again and are attracted to one another. The original unity reasserts itself, in the shape of the several forces that attract things and beings to one another. Men sacrifice themselves for the good of the State, for the safety of future citizens and for their happiness in the ensuing generations. In all this men and women derive a joy which is instinctive and not argued from hopes or expectations.

of present or future rewards for such conduct. We do not know who will enjoy the shade of the tree we plant on the road side. Still we do plant them. In regulating our conduct for re-birth we follow a similar process that contributes in populating the future world with good men and women. Posterity is ourselves according to Hinduism. Let us do what we can to raise a good race. Let us be good and where we have sinned let us repent. Let us plant our souls in the good earth and be born again as good men be it even without memories which if we had we could not bear the painful weight thereof. Let us be re-born purified and better than we are. If we all try thus the world will ultimately be a world full of good people. This is the plan of Vedanta—the eugenics of souls—a scientific plan to bring into existence a better breed of men. Have we not laboured to improve the breed of poultry and cattle? Has not we succeeded wonderfully the aim? Let us improve the breed of men bodies as well as souls. The hens do not remember their previous state. What does it matter? The cows do not recognize the progress that animal husbandry has brought to the race of cows. What does it matter if we shall not be able to remember who we were? Indeed it is better we do not remember. The object of right living is to a Vedantic twofold—one's own true happiness is attained thereby and one also contributes to a better world through

re-birth. From simple rural co-operation to patriotism and from patriotism to Vedanta—it is an integrated whole in widening circles. Co-operation improves the village. Patriotism produces a better country & in state of things Vedanta is intended to bring into being a better world.

### CONCLUSION

Summarizing what I have attempted to explain religions that contradict the conclusions of science cannot but degenerate into formalism and hypocrisy and Hindu philosophy can claim to be peculiarly in harmony with the latest knowledge. Secondly if human happiness and progress depend on doing away with selfishness and have to be based on a new economy of social co-operation Hindu philosophy furnishes a faith and a culture which are peculiarly fitted for such reorganization and which can support and strengthen the compulsory laws of a democratic State. Thirdly Hindu philosophy has raised catholicity and toleration to the level of positive and cardinal religious duty. Hindu philosophy has thus potentialities to make the greatest positive contribution to civilization. It has no quarrel whatsoever with the physicist or the geologist and yet it offers a firm spiritual foundation for a new co-operative and catholic polity for the governance of the world. It is not an opiate but can be a powerful driving force and automatic regulator.]

### EQUALITY OF RELIGIONS

The tree of religion is the same there is not that physical equality between the branches. They are all growing and the person who belongs to the growing branch must not gloat over it and say Mine is a superior one! None is superior none is inferior to other. There is no religion that is absolutely perfect or more or less perfect hence the conclusion that Christianity is as true and good as my own religion (Hinduism) but so also about Islam or Zoroastrianism or Judaism.

Living faith in God means acceptance of the brotherhood of mankind. It means equal respect for all religions. If Islam is dear to you Hinduism is dear to me and Christianity is dear to the Christians. It would be the height of intolerance—and intolerance is a species of violence to believe that your religion is superior to other religions and that you would be justified in wanting others to change over to your faith. —M K Gandhi

# P a r a m a t m a

SRI V RAJAGOPALA IYER, NILGIRIS

Paramatma is the Supreme Soul, of which we are but a part. He is without birth or death. He has neither a beginning nor an end. He is eternal. He is devoid of fear. He is one without a second (Advitiya). He pervades everywhere. He is a mere witness (Sakshimatra). He takes no sides. He is subtle, immaculate, immovable (like a mountain), is beyond conception, is all pervading, self-luminous (effulgent). He cannot be broken into fragments. He is unborn, yet He assumes various forms of his own accord playfully (Lilaya). He never decays. He is immortal. He is Satchidansada existence, knowledge and bliss. He shows Himself playfully in the hearts of Paramahamsas and Bhaktas. He is That whose form cannot even be conjectured by the Paramahamsas. He is the root-cause and fountain head of the fourteen worlds, quintessence of the Vedas Sastras, Nigamas and Agamas, is mentioned in the Upanishads, and is sought by the Yogis and Bhaktas. He is the dispeller of ignorance, remover of obstacles and giver of wisdom. He is the parrot encaged in the hearts of Paramahamsas. He is the Truth (Satya) personified and Tattvapadartha. He is Omkara (Om Ityekaksharam Brahma). He is Pranavaavarupa. He dispels the fears and woes of birth and death. He takes the Bhaktas across the ocean of Maya (illusion), Moha (delusion), and Samsara (worldly attachment), helping them to destroy the Asuras—Raga and Dvesha (likes and dislikes—attachment and repulsion), Kama and Krodha (desire and anger), etc.

He is ever ready to forgive those who have transgressed His commandment and swerved from the path of righteousness

and to forget whatever foul words have been uttered whether childishly or impulsively, bewildered by calamity or impelled by ignorance. He has extreme compassion on all devotees and fulfills their desires.

He with his consort Santi (Repose) always rejoices in the impregnable ethereal centre of the heart of his devotees. He is the real owner of materialdom as well as spiritualdom. His wives are Bhudevi and Sridevi so he is really the master of not only the earth but also material wealth and prosperity. He is not only the creator but also the preserver and destroyer of all (Brahma Vishnu, Mahesvara). Everything in this world belongs to Him.

He is in you in me, and everywhere. There is no place where He is not. Pulse-tion in us indicates His presence. He is above all. Anyone can reach Him, rich or poor. What He wants is our heart, if we pray to Him with love and sincerity, He is delighted and comes forward to help us at all times.

Atma viveka vichara help us to know as to what we are. We are not the body which is composed of 24 elements but something else which we call Atman. Atman is indestructible, neither can water wet it nor fire burn it. It is said by Bhagavan Sri Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita 'Naamam chhindanti sastrani na nainam dahati pavakah, na chainam kledayantyapo na soshayati marutah'. We are not the Deha but Dehi (the indweller) which we call Jivatma. The body often changes and is subject to Vikaras. Whereas the soul or atman is permanent (Sasvata-padartha). Atman is eternal. When a person dies, even though his body may be reduced to ashes, the soul does exist and takes its abode somewhere else. The

body is ephemeral. That is why the sages do not attach much importance to the body which is really a Nasvara padartha. To see Paramatma we have to discipline the mind and body, hence various Yamas and Niyamas with Pracayama and Nyayas are prescribed to help concentration and direct the mind one-pointedly. We can get rid of the mental ailments through proper discipline and constant devotion to the Uttama Purusha (Purushottama).

Action is inevitable so long as there is life. Let it be Satkarma (right action). Let us also have compassion and love for all and be instrumental in bringing peace to the needy.

There are various ways and manifold paths of reaching the Lord, of which the main Margas (paths) are Jnana marga and Bhakti marga (paths of knowledge and devotion). Bhakti marga or the path of devotion is the easiest of all. This can be followed easily by one and all who have faith in the Lord. Bhakti is nothing but complete surrender and constant devotion to the Paramatma (who has manifested Himself in various Avatars—Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesvara of the Hindu pantheon, Christ or the Son of God according to the Christian creed, and Alla according to the conception of the Mohamedans, etc.) with Prema and sincerity.

God is ever present where His Bhaktas are. He always rushes to the aid of His Bhaktas who love Him most, utter His name and sing His glory.

We must have Ananyabhakti, i.e., incessant love and devotion for the Supreme Person whom we wish to reach. Then He will look to our welfare as He Himself has said to Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita:

'Ananyaschintayanto mam ye janah  
parypnaspate,

Tesham nityahsyuktanam yogakshemam  
vahamyaham'

If we were to offer Him anything, however small it may be, God will accept it

with joy

"Patram pushpam phalam toyam yo me  
bhaktiya prayachchatis,  
Tadaham bhaktiyupalitamascam  
pravatatamantu "

What he expects from us is selfless devotion

Bhakti is essential for Nishrama Karma Yoga. Without Bhakti neither the Sankhya Yogi nor the Karma Yogi can shine. Bhakti is true love for the Lord who is embedded in the hearts of one and all. If we love one and all, God is pleased and peace all over the world will prevail then Hatred will then be extinct and love will predominate. All the high roads will be freed from evils and only good actions will be spread all over the world. It is the panacea for all evils in this world. This can be achieved by Japa or Nismasmarana i.e., by constantly uttering the name of the Lord (according to one's conception) in the form one loves Him most, wedging one's mind to Him the more and more one chants His name with faith and devotion the more and more shall one love Him. The mind will then become free from Raga and Dvesha and get itself attuned to Him automatically, whether we are acting or sleeping without any interruption. We must be firm in constantly meditating on Him, carrying out his commandments, hearing in mind that we are His Dasanandas, and that will lead us on finally to the Supreme Abode of the Paramatma to the Eternal Bliss after attaining which there is neither birth nor death.

So let us act in the right spirit, tread on the path of righteousness always, avoid Raga and Dvesha, Kama and Krodha, spread the gospel of Eternal Truth and spirituality with compassion and love towards our fellow beings, alleviate the sufferings of others to the best of our ability, and spread the universal knowledge of spiritual Truth and emancipation. This is my humble prayer to one and all, for here is the heart of true religion.

# Mukti or Liberation

SRI S SUBBA RAO, M.A., SECUNDERABAD

The words Mukti and Moksha mean liberation, and imply freedom from bondage. The desire for Mukti implies that we are now bound. Those that feel that they are chained to the wheel of Samsara or the cycle of births and deaths strive to free themselves. Such struggling soul's are termed Mumukshus. Once they attain their goal their struggle is ended and the desire for Moksha automatically vanishes, because, they are conscious that they are That.

Mukti is usually said to be of two kinds (1) Sadeha or with body, and (2) Videha or without body. Those who, by virtue of their past merit and by dint of their present strenuous effort, attain to a state of perfect desirelessness and selflessness belong to the first kind and are called "Jivanmuktas," i.e., those who have achieved freedom while yet living in this body. The Jivanmuktas when they cast off their body and exist as Pure Consciousness alone, are called "Videhamuktas," i.e., those who have attained disembodied liberation.

Those whose minds are in a state of perfect equilibrium and purity have conquered rebirth even here, for the Supreme Brahman is stainless. They are in truth Brahman. Thus, it follows that Brahman means a state of perfect purity and undisturbed equanimity. Those who are in such a state are as good as Brahman. Hence, liberation means an undisturbed state of the mind under all circumstances. This perfect equanimity can be attained only by getting rid of desire, egoism and attachment.

The liberated souls are God in human form and are named "Satpurushas." They

are so many beacon-lights to struggling humanity, and their work in this world

is impersonal. They live for Lokasangraha, and are the saviours of mankind.

But very few indeed are those who attain such a state of perfection. Complete desirelessness is seldom achieved by embodied beings, but we need not despair. One may not become a Jivanmukta in this life, but yet one can manage to free himself from the bondage of birth and death. If one dies thinking of God and God alone, one attains divinity and will not be obliged to be reborn.

It is an established spiritual rule that a man's next birth is determined by the idea that holds his mind at the time of death, and that idea which has been strengthened by constant repetition in life will be one's leading thought at the time of one's leaving the body.

Mention may be made here of Jada-harata who in one of his births had to become a deer as a result of his attachment to a fawn he had saved from the jaws of death. A similar story is told of a Sanyasi who lived in the city of Mithila. He died with the idea that he could not repay his debts to a cobbler into whose sandals he once stepped in to protect his feet from the burning heat of the summer at noon-tide. As a consequence, he was reborn as the cobbler's son, and thus had to clear his old accounts. As our last thought determines our next birth, and as our strongest thought will be our last thought, we are advised to think of the Lord at all times and fight the battle of life.

Thoughts tend to repeat themselves by force of habit. Therefore we should cultivate the habit of entertaining pious thoughts and chant holy names, first during our leisure hours, and then gradually at all times, so that we may acquire sufficient

etc) He uses His own Chit Sakti that is His Will and His Knowledge There is no instrument external to Himself

What is the relation between Siva and Sakti? Siva is that Supreme, Effulgent Being, Sakti is nothing but His Knowledge and His Grace In the Sun there is the heat and there are the rays These are compared to Sakti, which is not separate from Himself Through His Sakti He performs Sankalpa and the world comes into being

To sum up The material cause is Maya It is not an illusion but an existing, though a changing reality. The efficient cause is the Lord Himself and the instrumental cause is His Will And He performs the Paocha Kriyas

One of His Maogala Guoas is his compassion towards the souls bound by Maya By making use of one of the Saktis, He induces the soul to get out of its clutches All souls have a fundamental, common characteristic, at the same time each one has got its own individual characteristics There is individuality Children born of the same parents may for all practical purposes be of the same temperament, but if you look sufficiently deep, you will find that their tastes differ The souls have got their own individuality, and the Lord who is pervading everything knows what the needs of each individual are, and accordingly He creates Tanu karana bhuvana bhoga until the grip of the principle of darkness is loosened For that purpose He performs the Pancha Kriyas

#### VEDANTA AND SIDDHANTA

The Vedanta is the Upanishadic portion of the Vedas Saiva Siddhanta is the essence thereof Whereas the Vedas are universally recognised as the highest scriptural Pramana by all Hindus, some do accept and some do not accept the authority of the Saiva Agamas The Saiva Siddhantins accept both They look upon the Vedas as those

meant for all souls, and they speak the truth and nothing but the truth But they give room for different interpretations according to the stage of evolution reached by the person who tries to understand their meaning Thus the Veda is common to all and is interpreted by different people in different ways But when you come to the Agamas there is no such possibility of difference of opinion Souls that have reached a certain high stage of evolution are expected to study the Agamas There are no two opinions about their conclusions They say "This is truth These are Sadhanas you should practise They are not meant for all but for those who have reached a very high stage of Mumukshatwa" Sri Nilakantha sees no difference between the Vedas and the Agamas Trumular also says that the Vedas are general, and that the Agamas are special Another great Jnani, Kumaracarya Swamigal has compared the Vedas to a tree which is planted in the field of Onkara The tree gradually grows up puts forth shoots, branches, leaves and flowers and finally the fruits He compares the various systems of thought to the branches leaves, flowers and unripe fruits All are essential, without them you cannot get fruits He gives the position of the essence of the fruits to Siddhanta So, without the tree of the Vedas there is no Agama or Siddhanta This is the way in which our people united the two groups of scriptures and saw oneness in them "The Saiva Siddhanta system is the distilled essence of Vedanta" says Swami Sivananda, and this is indeed a very pregnant sentence We should try to honour and profit by both the systems

#### SOUL'S RELATION TO GOD

According to Siddhantic thought, souls are innumerable, infinite in number They have got latent in them the powers of emotion, Intellect and will

strength to displace all worldly thoughts from the mind at the time of death. The state attained by a person who dies thinking of God alone does not in any way fall short of true liberation. Like a Jivanmukta, he merges in the Absolute, and will not be reborn. He does not merely taste the Bliss Divine. He becomes the Bliss itself.

Liberation may thus seem to be very cheaply obtained. But it is not so easy as it appears at first sight. To think of God, and nothing but God, at the time of death, may not be practicable, for several obvious reasons. In the first instance, none knows for certain when he or she will die, and even if by some chance or other one becomes aware of the time of one's death, there is no guarantee that one will think of God alone at the last moment. When the soul leaves the body, its whole life-history is unrolled before its mind's eye, like a cinema-reel, and it finally settles on that idea which engrosses its attention by virtue of habitual association. Besides, there is no certainty if one would die in a healthy condition of one's consciousness. That is why we are wisely counselled to remember God ceaselessly while we have full control over our senses and mind. A famous verse says—

'O Lord Krishna! Let the swan of my mind enter the cage of thy Lotus Feet even now, for how can one remember Thee at the time when one's life breath struggles to set off on its other worldly journey and when the throat is choked up with phlegm, wind and bile?'

Another essential condition for the attainment of Videhamukti is that the mind should come to a one-pointed absorption in God, leaving no room for any other thought, whether earthly or heavenly. If, however, the mind is not so concentrated, and there is an admixture of other thoughts, two courses are open to the departed

soul. If the person has longing for enjoyment in higher world, he will pass along the Devayana (the path of the gods) or the path of light through the gateway of the Sun to Brahma Loka. There, he will attain perfect mental equanimity by the grace of Brahma, and will merge in the Absolute at the end of Brahma's Kalpa. If on the other hand, his desires are earthly he will tread the Pitriyana (the path of the ancestors) or the path of darkness. He will enter the celestial regions through the gateway of the Moon, and having enjoyed there heavenly delights for a fairly long period, he will come down to the earth through rain. Entering into plants and trees through the rain water, he will become food for men. Food is digested and converted into semen and ovum, the union of which results in the creation of a new human form. Here again, two distinct levels of evolution are marked out. If the soul has a hankering (however slight) for material pleasures in addition to its spiritual aspiration, it will be born in the household of prosperous parents having a strong bent towards spirituality.

There may be no trace of a desire for worldly pleasures. But, however, one may long to be great in the spiritual realm or serve others in the spiritual direction. Such a one will be born in the family of great Yogis so that he may prosecute his spiritual Sadhana from an early age and become a Jivanmukta.

In the Puranas, mention is made of five kinds of Mukti: (1) Salokya—to live in the same world as God's; (2) Samipya—to live near God; (3) Sarupya—to have the same form as God's; (4) Sarshita—to be a part and parcel of God's body and enjoy the same powers as God's; and (5) Sayujya—to be one with God or merge in God. It will be seen that there has been a progressive march towards and a nearer and a more

intimate approach to God in the several kinds of Moksha cited above. The first four assume a personal God and liberation is possible only after leaving the body. The fifth, i.e., Sayujya Muktī is something like a drop of water losing itself in the boundless ocean. No individuality is

retained, because there is no essential difference. This Muktī is possible both in and out of the body.

Religion is living in consonance with the ideals befitting the attainment of Muktī. Religion is a way of life with a predominant urge for spiritual perfection.

## Principles of Saiva Siddhanta

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### INTRODUCTORY

Saiva Siddhanta is universal in outlook. It is a system of thought explained in terms of logic also. But this system itself says that these logical coherences are good only up to a certain stage beyond that the Ultimate Experience is the only test which is satisfactory. This system says further that people will naturally develop several systems of thought and that all of them have truth at their core. But, in the degree of the understanding of that Truth there may be difference. There may be lack of clearness, self contradictions and an element of untruth. But, all the same, every system of thought has an element of truth. Therefore, all are acceptable to Saiva Siddhanta. Only, each must be put in its proper place, and the whole must be seen as one.

Sarvam means Anandam, incomparabile bliss, that which is ever blissful, the unchanging Reality. It is all knowing, all-powerful, omnipresent and all gracious. It is Ananda—it is all-love. That is Sarvam. Siddhantam means "conclusion". But in our text books on the subject, the term is said to mean 'conclusion of conclusions'. As there are many systems of thought, there are as many conclusions—and each

is the Siddhanta for the particular system. Saiva Siddhanta is the conclusion of all these conclusions. All these conclusions are examined, the scriptural conclusions are also examined, then a final conclusion is arrived at. That is "Siddhantam". It is also known as "Agamantam," the conclusion of the Agamas, i.e., the Saiva Agamas. Siddhantam is Agamantam. It is also 'Vedantam'.

As for the source of our religious and philosophical knowledge we may say that all the great languages of India form the source. Pre-eminently the sources are the Vedas which are written in Sanskrit. Another ancient and highly developed language namely, Tamil is another great source. Corresponding to the Vedas and the Agamas, we have got in Tamil the twelve Tirumurais (a collection of 18,000 and odd hymns) and the fourteen Siddhanta Sastras expounding the philosophy of the Saiva Siddhanta. All of them explicitly say that they derive their authority from the Vedas and the Saiva Agamas.

### GOD ACCORDING TO SAIVA-SIDDHANTA

The Saiva Siddhanta philosophy speaks of the three Padarthas—God, Soul and the Universe. Pati, Pasu and Pasa are the technical terms used. The Sutras begin

with the proof of the existence of God They employ logic and wherever possible, quote the scriptures also

All things are produced by someone Some of the things are without knowledge, therefore, they could not have evolved by themselves as a Cosmos Therefore, the Cosmos must have been created by an intelligent and supreme Being This is the cosmological argument for the existence of God .

The famous philosopher Kant has raised the objection that we are arguing from the finite to the Infinite It is very difficult to answer his objection except to say that it is inevitable We have to conclude with a First Cause If one asks "What is the cause of that First Cause?" it will be impossible to arrive at any conclusion Anavastha Dosha will result There will be no distinction between Cause and Effect Reasoning will come to a stop Therefore a first causeless Cause must be accepted It is necessary, practical experience points to that There is also the teleological argument for the existence of God There is a definite plan in the world, there is a purpose visible in the universe There must, therefore, be a Planner, He is God Even this has been criticized But, Kant had a partiality for the moral argument There is a sense of the Good in us That itself is the proof of God We need not go into the detailed examination of these arguments As one writer has pointed out, all these arguments have cumulative effect and prove the existence of God

Saiva Siddhanta also lays down the attributes of God. He is without Name, without form, without parts He is eternal, birthless, deathless, unchanging, all-merciful, all-knowing His knowledge is not of the usual kind, He knows all at the same time, without the division of subject and object. And His other quality which

matters most to us is that He is all compassion, all-love Tirukural, which is one of the greatest of books mentions eight qualities of God One of them is compassion which links God and man Many give Him various names, but in His Swarupa He has no name

On account of His compassion, He sees the souls bound by the principle of darkness He is moved by His compassionate nature He begins to release these bound souls from the clutches of the principle of darkness It is clear that we are finite, that something binds us That something is referred to as Pasam that which binds the soul Therefore, the soul is called Pasu When was it bound? From Acava Kala i.e. is bound If the soul has been bound from time immemorial, is there any chance of the soul getting itself freed? Yes A time comes when this will drop away, with regard to individual souls The example given is of paddy In the paddy you have got the rice proper inside it has got the bran, it has got also the sprouting capacity But the rice can be removed from the bran and saved from sprouting Similarly the soul can be freed from the clutches of Acava, Karma and Maya The Lord in his own way and according to His own Plan, frees each one of these souls, stage by stage

For the creation of the universe, the creation of our gross material world, the subtle world, and still subtler ones, He uses Maya In Saiva Siddhanta the term Maya means simple primordial substance without form or name It assumes name and form - very very subtle In its later and grosser states it acquires names and forms The Lord uses this primordial substance for the purpose of creating worlds and bodies As regards the instrument that He uses (just as a potter when he wants to make pots out of clay uses the wheel,

etc) He uses His own Chit-Sakti that is, His Will and His Knowledge. There is no instrument external to Himself.

What is the relation between Siva and Sakti? Siva is that Supreme, Effulgent Being. Sakti is nothing but His Knowledge and His Grace. In the Sun there is the heat and there are the rays. These are compared to Sakti, which is not separate from Himself. Through His Sakti He performs Sankalpa and the world comes into being.

To sum up, The material cause is Maya. It is not an illusion, but an existing, though a changing reality. The efficient cause is the Lord Himself and the instrumental cause is His Will. And He performs the Pancha Kriyas.

One of His Mangala Gunas is his compassion towards the souls bound by Maya. By making use of one of the Saktis, He induces the soul to get out of its clutches. All souls have a fundamental, common characteristic, at the same time, each one has got its own individual characteristics. There is individuality. Children born of the same parents may for all practical purposes be of the same temperament, but if you look sufficiently deep, you will find that their tastes differ. The souls have got their own individuality, and the Lord who is pervading everything knows what the needs of each individual are, and accordingly He creates Tanu karana bhuvane bhoga, until the grip of the principle of darkness is loosened. For that purpose He performs the Pancha-Kriyas.

#### VEDANTA AND SIDDHANTA

The Vedanta is the Upanishadic portion of the Vedas. Saiva Siddhanta is the essence thereof. Whereas the Vedas are universally recognized as the highest scriptural Pramanam by all Hindus, some do accept and some do not accept the authority of the Saiva Agamas. The Saiva Siddhantins accept both. They look upon the Vedas as those

meant for all souls, and they speak the truth and nothing but the truth. But they give room for different interpretations according to the stage of evolution reached by the person who tries to understand their meaning. Thus the Veda is common to all and is interpreted by different people in different ways. But when you come to the Agamas there is no such possibility of difference of opinion. Souls that have reached a certain high stage of evolution are expected to study the Agamas. There are no two opinions about their conclusions. They say "This is truth. These are Sadhanaas you should practise. They are not meant for all but for those who have reached a very high stage of Mumukshutwa." Sri Nilakanta says no difference between the Vedas and the Agamas. Tirumular also says that the Vedas are general, and that the Agamas are special. Another great Jnani, Kumaracarya Swamiyal, has compared the Vedas to a tree which is planted in the field of Orikara. The tree gradually grows up, puts forth shoots, branches, leaves and flowers and finally the fruits. He compares the various systems of thought to the branches, leaves, flowers and unripe fruits. All are essential, without them you cannot get fruits. He gives the position of the essence of the fruits to Siddhanta. So, without the tree of the Vedas there is no Agama or Siddhanta. This is the way in which our people united the two groups of scriptures and saw oneness in them. "The Saiva Siddhanta system is the distilled essence of Vedanta," says Swami Sivananda, and this is indeed a very pregnant sentence. We should try to honour and profit by both the systems.

#### SOUL'S RELATION TO GOD

According to Siddhantic thought, souls are innumerable, infinite in number. They have got latent in them the powers of emotion, intellect and will.

Better terms of these would be Ichha Jnana and Kriya. These Saktis are lying latent in them as the tree is lying latent in the seed. Why are they kept latent? That is on account of the grip which the principle of darkness has over the individual soul. The compassionate Lord wants to release the souls from this grip of Anava. For that purpose He employs Maya. He creates out of it worlds and bodies and instruments of the enjoyment of pain and pleasure. In that way, He pushes into action the souls lying more or less inert like lifeless things without any desire, thought or action. This help is rendered all unknown to the soul. In that way Karma comes into being.

Souls have got two main characteristics which really sum up a number of other minor characteristics. One is that souls cannot remain all by themselves alone. They are always found attached either to God or to Pasa. They have got the latent capacity to desire, to know and to will. But none of these capacities come into play so long as souls remain completely united to Anava, i.e., the principle of darkness because in darkness the soul sees nothing. It does not see itself nor does it see the principle of darkness which binds it much less therefore can it see anything about God. But the Lord's Plan is to redeem the soul from the grip of the principle of darkness and get it united to Himself. Gradually, it becomes one with God and shares His Maogala Gunes and remains in inseparable union with Him. Therefore, the first characteristic of the soul is that it cannot remain all by itself unattached to anything.

The other characteristic is that it partakes of the nature of the object with which it happens to be united. If it is in union with the principle of darkness, it is darkness itself. If and when it remains

united with the Lord, it shares all the qualities of the Lord. One great seer, Saint Tayumanavar addresses the Lord thus—O Lord I have been in Advaitic relation with Anava the principle of darkness. Who will the day dawn when I shall stand in Advaitic union with Thy omniscient and changeless Self? Who will the day dawn when I shall realize the Advaitic union with Thee? Two things in one inseparable relation—that is Advaitic Union.

#### CLASSIFICATION OF SOULS

Souls can be divided into three groups. Those who belong to the highest order are known as the Vijoankalas. Those of the second order are the Prayakalas. Souls of the third order are the Sakalas.

The Pasa has its principal force Anava. When the soul is pushed into activity Karma springs up. The instrument for pushing it up is matter or Maya. The first class of souls have only the Acava binding them. Their actions do not lead to any enjoyment of the fruits of actions. They have no Karma, nor are they bound by Maya. They do not have bodies. The Asandha Maya. They are bound only by the Mula Mala or Anava.

The second class of souls have got the Anava and Karma but no Maya. The last group, known by the name of Sakalas, i.e., those who are united to all the Kalas and all the Jo Tattwas are the ordinary souls who have not yet attained the state of Jivan mukti. All the three Mala rule them and govern them.

Beyond these three groups are those who are Jivanmuktas. For instance our Gurudev, Swami Sivananda has gone beyond the Vijnana Kala stage. He is one with God. That is the last stage.

The Sakala souls like ordinary people pass through three stages (sometimes sub-divided into five stages of consciousness)

First is the Kevala Avastha, that is, the stage in which the soul is wholly bound by the principle of darkness—that is, when the Ichcha Jnana and Kriya Shaktis have not begun to manifest at all. There was such a stage for us, but we do not remember it now. Then comes the Sakala Avastha, that is, the stage in which people like us are found. They are bound up with Tanu-Karana-Bhuvana-Bhoga. They are making use of the Kalas, and are now struggling for light. God gives us occasionally a glimpse of His Presence and His Grace. As we proceed further, we see more of the Reality of the Divine. When we have the good fortune to move with the great ones, with the released ones, we get greater glimpses of that life of union with the Supreme Being—the Buddha state. The Buddha state is the life of the Jivanmukte. He is one who is not at all affected by the body in which he lives and the world which provides the environment for his body—one who is above all the Tattwas, and is in union with the Lord. He is not at all different from the Lord.

But we have already progressed far from the Kevala state and we have come high up in the Sakala stage. We are now struggling for reaching the Buddha Avastha as early as possible. It is very categorically stated that that Buddha stage can be reached in this very birth if we strive hard. Even if we fail, in the next birth we will complete our journey. That stage can be reached and has been reached by highly evolved Swamis.

In the South, we generally illustrate this point to the young ones by drawing their attention to Lord Dakshinamurti's posture and his Chinmudra. Here the thumb symbolizes the Pati which is ever standing all by itself. The next finger represents the soul bound by Pasam or Malam. The three fold Pasam (i.e., Anava,

Karma and Maya) is represented by the other three fingers. In all, the fingers stand connected with the palm to indicate their co-existence. In the Kevala state the soul is not aware of its condition. Gradually it comes out of the surrounding darkness and experiences pain and pleasure through the Tanu-Karana-Bhuvana (i.e., both physical and mental organs and the world). Ultimately, in the Buddha Avastha it realizes its eternal union with God. This is represented by the Chinmudra where the thumb and the next finger are found united in this manner. This is neither one or two, but two in one. That is the Advaita relation.

Even among the three Malas there is a beautiful distinction. The most important of them is the Anava-mala represented by the middle finger, it is very tall, the Capital 'I'. The ring finger corresponds to the Karma mala which is always pushing us into action. Maya-mala represented by the little finger plays its humble part in relaxing the grip of Anava-mala over the soul, according to the dictation of the Divine Will. In the Skanda Purana also we have this symbology. Three Asuras are destroyed by Lord Skanda. The eldest brother is Surapadma, the second is Simhamukha and the third is Tarakasura. The relative heights of the three fingers are suggestive of this relationship.

Without God we can do nothing see nothing. The dependence of the world and soul on God is emphasized everywhere. He is pure Chit, not dependent upon any instrument for getting knowledge or performing action, but we are dependent on the instrument supplied by Him out of His Grace. Even when the instruments come, He is to be within us to move and direct us to use them. The example given is of the eye and the sun. The eye has the capacity to see, but the sun's rays must be there in order that the eye may see.

the object. God's Sakti must be with us. The Siddhasia Sastras go one step further and say that He sees and acts along with us in order to enable us to see and act. But they are careful to emphasize that as He has no body or material or mental instruments, and has no likes and dislikes, He is not affected by thus moving us to see and act. Only as Aupacharikata (courtesy) one can say that He also sees and enjoys. His Upakara (help) is unimaginable. Jnanis alone can realize the depth of the Upakara which the Almighty God has been giving us all through our various incarnations. He has brought us up to the level in which we are now. This Upakara that we have received from the Lord, all unasked, creates in us a sense of gratitude. That leads on to Bhakti, and to absolute self-surrender. We then see with the eyes of Wisdom—the God-given Inner Eye. We altogether get into a different mood and attitude. We see that in the great sages.

God is in direct Advaita-relation with the soul, always helping it; and through the soul He is in Advaita-relation with the world. Of course, He is all-pervading. In a special sense He is in direct relation with the soul. He is Chit; and we are also Chit—that is the one relation we can claim with the Lord. But we are Chit which stands in need of His help. He is Chit which sees all things at all times with no instruments except His own Will and His own Power. We are dependent Chits, whereas He is independent Chit.

#### BONDAGE

Now we pass on to Pasa. Pasa is so called because it binds souls. It is divided into three Malas. The principal element in the Pasa group is Anava. It is so called because this principle of darkness binds the Jiva and restricts its Vyapakata, and reduces it to the position of an 'I'. Anava is also called the Mula-

Mala. It is worse than darkness which conceals everything. For, while we can at least see the darkness, the darkness of Anava does not reveal itself while hiding everything else. That is the nature of this Mula-mala. It is one and ever-existent. It functions through various Saktis of its own. Souls are infinite, and each has got its own special characteristic. Therefore, Anavamala, whose general function is to keep down the soul's Ichha, Jnana and Kriya, does so in a special way in dealing with individual souls.

Although Anavamala has been there from beginningless time, it is a thing which will cease to function at a certain stage in the soul's evolution. It continues to exist in all the three states of the soul—Kavala, Sakala and Suddha. But its power to hide ceases at a certain stage when the soul reaches the last state—Suddha Avastha. The position of Anava is then comparable to the dried seed which may appear to be a seed, but cannot germinate. It is like a piece of burnt cloth. It may appear to be like a cloth from a distance, but it is no more a cloth. It is absolutely powerless to act again as before in the case of the released soul.

Its primary function is to hide from the soul a knowledge of its own nature, to hide the presence of the Lord, and to hide even the real nature of the world. To hide is the primary nature of the inner darkness. It is the source of ignorance. Then comes the evolution of the idea of the little 'self' of Ahankara and Mamakara of 'I' and 'mine'.

#### WHAT IS MAYA

Maya means that from which things evolve and into which they involve. It is the material cause of the physical universe—the bodies and the mental faculties. It is insentient, eternal, formless and possessed of several powers. It serves to provide the light of partial or imperfect knowledge

to the Anava-hound souls. It is one of the Saktis of the Lord. It is a changing reality. This Maya is broadly speaking divided into two orders or two states: Suddha Maya and Asuddha Maya. Some divide the Asuddha Maya into Misra Maya and Prakriti Maya.

Souls in the Sakala stage are all living in the Prakriti Maya. The higher order of Devas (many of them) are in the Misra Maya. Those belonging to a still higher order are in Suddha Maya. All these classes of Maya are again sub-divided into 36 Tattwas in all. Of these, Atma-Tattwas are 24. They are in the region of Prakriti Maya or Asuddha Maya. Vidyā Tattwas and Siva Tattwas are 7 and 5; they belong to the regions of Misra Maya and Suddha Maya: all this is extremely subtle matter. You will find plenty of details about these in the Siddhanta works.

Of these Tattwas (evolutes) the subtlest (form of Maya) is called Nada. This is the topmost Tattwa. The Supreme Being can be realized when we reach the Nada Tattwas and then cross it. Just right ahead of that Nada is the Lord—at the Nadantam. Not that He is separate from it—because He pervades everything—but He can be seen as He is Himself after we reach the Nada-Tattwa. He is beyond all the Tattwas, all the while pervading them. The released soul catches a glimpse of the Tattwas as he pervades the Tattwas.

It is these Tattwas that provide us with the bodies, minds and environments. The grossest is, of course, the Prithivi Tattwa—the grossest of the Pancha-Bhutas. The highest is the Nada-Tattwa as stated above.

#### SIVA LINGA WORSHIP

Siva Linga Worship which is prevalent throughout our land is highly significant symbolically. God has Ashtamurtis—eight forms. Of the eight, seven are material, viz., earth, water, fire, air, ether,

the sun and the moon. The Chit is only the Jiva. The Siva Linga symbol suggests to us that the highest form of worship is to see the Lord in one's own soul, Jivatma. That is the message that the Siva Linga has. The Peetha for the Siva Linga represents the lotus of the heart. The Siva Linga represents the Jivatma. In the Upanishads we read about the Atma Linga and Atma Jyoti. That is the Jivatma—the 'flame' which is Angusta Pramana, of the size of thumb. The highest form of worship is to try to see the Lord as Jyoti within, the flame of the soul. Those who are incapable of doing that have to go to the forms in Prithivi, or create a form in water or fire, and those who have no form may use Vayu or Akasa. They may worship the Lord in Surya or Chandra. All these have been objects of worship. But the highest form of worship is to see the Paramatma in the Jivatma. Therefore, the Siva Linga is devoid of form. Any man who wants a form with Kara-Charana for his concentration can have a Murti. But, more advanced souls who want to see the Lord in the soul, will have the Linga for their concentration.

Right in front of the Siva Linga is the Nandi, squatting, and facing the Lord. That represents the released soul. Behind it there is the Bali Peetha. That is the Peetha where we have to perform a sacrifice. What is to be sacrificed? Ahamkara, Mamakara, all attachments. The released soul then faces the Lord. As we first enter the Siva Temple we have got the Dhwaja Stambha first, then the Bali Peetha, then the squatting Nandi. The squatting Nandi suggests that the Jiva has shed off its Ahamkara: "I am not the doer... I surrender myself to Thee. Do with me as thou likest." This is represented by the bull facing the Lord. It is the Sampradaya that no worshipper should go between the

Nandi and the Lord, because the released soul is in union with Him. The Dhwaja Stambha represents concentration after throwing out the limited things of the world leaving them behind us outside the Gopura. When we enter the Gopura and reach the Dhwaja Stambha our mind must remain steady and undisturbed like the Stambha. Then we must sacrifice our Ahamkara and Maman-kara, as we are near the Bali Poetha, then we should reach the position of the released soul the squatting Nandi.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF BHASMA

While I am on the subject of symbology, let me dwell a little upon the symbology of Bhasma (the sacred ashes). That is also a symbol. How do we get the sacred ash? It is got from the cow or Pasu. It is a quadruped Pasu. We are all biped Pasus. The Pasu with a clean body living in clean surroundings gives us the Gomaya (cow-dung). That is taken for preparing Bhasma (or Vibhuti) and then the Agni is lit. With certain appropriate Mantras imagining that the flame is the form of Siva Himself the dried balls of cow-dung are put into the fire believing all the while that the Lord is present there and that this sacred ash will obtain His Grace. With that faith the Bhasma is prepared. It is considered that it is the form of the Lord. Then we treat it as sacred. It is the Mala of the Pasu that has been reduced to Bhasma by fire. It has now become white. The symbol makes me think thus "My being is covered by Mala now. Let the fire of Siva Jnana consume the three Malas represented by the three marks. Let whiteness (purity) be produced in me and let me reach the Suddha Kaivalya state."

#### MOKSHA

We have seen what the Siddhanta says with regard to the nature of the Pati Pasu and Pasa and their relation. It is only an

outline that it is possible for me to try to give. There are very many details in the regular treatises on the subject.

God, all unknown to the soul, has been helping it. We have passed through the mineral kingdom, risen to the animal kingdom, and then still higher to the human kingdom. There also we made a good deal of progress before we are enabled to raise the questions 'Who am I? Whence am I? Where am I proceeding? What is the nature of all these things that I see around me? When shall I overcome my faults and imperfections?' A good many people have reached this stage of questioning about these fundamental problems of life. Jesus once said to his disciples "Be ye as perfect even as your Father in Heavens is perfect." Some inner urge proceeds from within us and we want to find out ways and means for reaching that perfection.

Men have in them very many good traits and as many in the opposite direction also. Even the worst sinner likes the good. In spite of his lacking goodness, he does evil. When we appreciate goodness good things we want to reach the perfection of that good. That longing is there.

#### SADHANA

What are the Sadhanas? The first Sadhana is, of course, like the foundation on which a palace is to be built. The Samava Sadhanas (religious discipline and practices) and experiences may be likened to a palatial beautiful building. But the visible beautiful palatial and attractive building stands upon a solid foundation which is invisible. That foundation must first be provided. That symbolizes our general conduct and character—noble pure, good strong character and conduct. That is the foundation. This foundation can be easily understood when we recall to mind the names Yama and Niyama, with which

all of us are familiar Those characteristics must be fully developed in us They form the foundation Even when we try to lay the foundation strong and sure, we, Sadhakas, feel sometimes that we are slipping into temptation, and that Satan overwhelms us Pain and remorse follow This struggle will be there in laying a strong foundation of Yama-Niyama in thought, word and deed

Then we have to adopt the various means Satsanga Japa, for example I for one (or a man of my temperament) will prefer crying out to the Lord for help

Oh Lord, I cannot conquer by myself the evil in me Thou art one who hast been helping me all the time Now why dost Thou allow me to slip back? Thou hast pulled me up many a time before Again my weakness pulls me down Help me! Help me!" I do not say that is the only method A braver soul might adopt some other more manly method Whatever be the method the seeker must acquire a strong character purity and strength in thought, word and deed and all the other qualifications and qualities that are mentioned and included in the term 'Yama Niyama' must be formed That as I said is the foundation of religious life Without that there is no strong spiritual edifice Satya Ahimsa, Asteya Aparigraha and Brahma charya -these must form the foundation of religion

In passing we may just pause for a while to note the special Samaya Acharyas Saiva Siddhanta speaks in great detail of Dikshas Samaya Diksha Visesha Diksha Nirvana Diksha and Acharya Abhisheka There are also other classifications of Diksha which we need not notice now

Samaya Diksha the entrant's Diksha is to be given to all fairly clean people who are theists Men women and children of certain age all are initiated Cleanliness in food and in body is insisted upon

Ordinarily, a certain method of doing external worship and the chanting of Pan chakshara or some other Mantra pertaining to a form of Siva are taught in the Samaya Diksha without too much of difficulties attached to its practice

Viaesha Diksha is something higher with a little more of Japa, worship, concentration, etc

Nirvana Diksha is something very much higher still, one which ordinary people cannot hope to get initiated into

Acharya Abhisheka is still higher than this In former days the temple priests were expected to have received all the four Dikshas They were entitled to worship in temples only after they got the Acharya Abhisheka They should see no copper or gold in the images but only the living God They should be Yogis They should be men who have been leading a clean householder's life, and they should have become Yogis performing Tapas

#### FOUR SPECIAL SADHANAS

We shall now take up the Sadhanas Love and devotion to God are the essence of the special Sadhanas They rest upon the general Sadhana in formation of a good and strong character The special Sadhanas are for developing spiritual knowledge and virtues and obtaining the realization of God

Now these special Sadhanas are mentioned as four Charya Kriya Yoga and Jnana Only those who have felt the emptiness of mundane things and have a longing for union with the Supreme Being enter upon this fourfold path

The Charya Marga treat God as the Master and the soul or the worshipper as the servant The worship is done largely from the external point of view, serving the Lord in temples, gathering flowers planting flower plants cleaning the temple — all the while keeping at a distance from

Him—chanting the sacred name of the Lord, listening to Puranas, serving the devotees of the Lord with love and abundance—all these things constitute the qualities of the life of a man in Charya Marga. Gaudia can conceive of as the Master high above all. God is in the temple—in the image ‘From a distance I shall serve the Lord.’ This outer method is predominant in the Charya Marga. It is also called the Dasa Marga—the path in which God is regarded as Master and the devotee as the servant at a distance.

Then the next stage, which marks an advance over this method, is called Kriya Marga. Here a fuller initiation into the meaning of the Panchakshra or names other Mula Mantra is given by a qualified person who has practised it. The Sadhaka has an image of his own Ishta and performs Puja with his own hands. He performs Ahisheka and offers Dhupa, Deepa and Naivedya just as a priest does in the temple. He does all this in his own home. That marks one step nearer to the final goal. This is called the Kriya Marga. The relation between God and devotee is that of between father and son. Hence this Marga is called the Satputra Marga. This is the path shown by Lord Jages and several other saints of his type. Here, as I said the person himself performs the Puja and one prays to God that He might be present in a special degree in the image that he is having before him and performs certain rites like Avahana Prana Pratista etc. to signify this attitude. He then takes it that the Lord is there present in a special degree in the image and offers his worship with some special inner meaning which is just beginning to dawn upon him.

The third stage is the Yoga Marga where the Vayu is controlled and the mind is directed to some object mentioned by the Guru—an object within the Sadhaka

himself and not outside. That is an introspective task placed at a centre in the body. It may be the lotus of the heart or the space between the two eyebrows. A certain Murti with a certain form should be thought of in a certain manner, and the mind sought to be fixed there. The Guru whom must be a Yogi himself, knows the need of the person and he will impart such Upadesas as will help the aspirant to have the benefits of introspection and Dhyans.

The Marga is known also as the Sakha Marga where God is looked upon as a friend. It is a difficult attitude to maintain since all the while the aspirant knows God as superior to him. But all the time, at any rate the fear shown in external behaviour recedes in the background. The Yogi is always in the company of the Lord as it were.

Lastly comes the Jnana Marga where the question of difference is lost. Overwhelming love makes the difference between the two vanish. Very often it is compared in the ideal lover and the ideal beloved. In the Jnana Marga duality is not realized or noticed, nor becomes merged in the other, like the ideal lover and his beloved who feel themselves as one soul though they have separate bodies.

#### FRUITS OF SADHANA

The Prayojana (benefit) that we get from each stage is this. In the Charya Marga the benefits that the devotee gets while he is in his present body are of course great. But, after the dissolution of the body the soul reaches Salokya i.e. lives in the Loka of the Deity whom he has been worshiping all along from the Charya standpoint.

The worshipper in the Kriya stage attains Samipya that is in the Loka where his Ishta Devata resides he stands very near Him enjoying His Darshan.

The soul in the Yoga stage reaches

its nature unless the heating element is combined with it. Inanimate nature exhibits only a single tendency. The contrary tendency cannot be its nature. It may be induced by the influence of an alien element. It is the nature of a piece of stone to lie unmoved in a place where it is thrown. Moving is not its nature. If it should be moved it must be acted upon by a separate agency like the wind or the human hand. While this is the characteristic of an unintelligent entity, we should observe that the nature of an intelligent being is to move and stop according to its purpose. Bearing in mind this distinction between an unintelligent and intelligent entity we must observe the phenomena of the world and then we shall be able to realize the purposive influence of intelligent beings on unintelligent entities and also the influence of superior intelligences on inferior intellectual beings.

Everything in the world undergoes the process of birth development and decay. If it is animate nature rules the world there will be only one process. Development may be going on but there will be nothing to stop it. If development is natural its opposite process called decay cannot also be natural. It should be due to an alien influence. We have already seen that the world has an intelligent purpose at its back and the purpose is effectuated by supreme intelligence. Hence the processes of the world should be due to and controlled by an intelligent God and not induced or led by blind nature.

It may be said that everything that has birth growth and decay is moved by a soul so that there are only a number of souls and no God. This view is short sighted because all things in the world are governed by a moral and physical order over which individual souls have no control and which presupposes the supre-

macy of supreme intelligence. The world has a systematic unity and that unity can be brought only by a unique power whom we call the Almighty God.

The theory of the Lokayatas is that everything in the world is due to the spontaneous action of the elements. This is refuted on the ground that the elements have contrary qualities which can be brought into orderly activity only by an intelligent agency for instance if water and fire combine both will neutralize themselves. The tendency of water is to go down and that of fire is to flare up. The earth will be under water and cannot by itself go between water and fire. If we want hot water an intelligent man should light the fire place a pot over it and pour water into the pot to make it hot. Hot water cannot be produced by the earth water and fire combining of their own accord in a creative manner.

It is the view of the Siddhantas that the whole world undergoes evolution and involution in fullness of time and hence he who is the cause of involution should also be the cause of evolution. A scientific investigation of the processes of evolution and involution will convince us of the truth of a thorough involution. In making the investigation one should use not only the ordinary instruments of observation but include in it the Yogic vision or second sight. Those who possess it pursue the subject of involution step by step. Things in the world are resolvable into five elements and the elements themselves are traceable in subtler entities called Tanmatras and they are traceable in modern science to a combination of electrons and protons. And these themselves being microscopic forms of things are resolvable into unformed pre material substratum which we call Maya and Maya is perceptible only to Yogic vision. Great sears

who had that vision have observed that by process of time, things reduce themselves to the Mayaic substratum and rise again, taking forms from it. The wheel of Time so revolves that at distant times all the things in the world reach the Mayaic stage and are then reproduced.

### THE UNIVERSE

On the synthetic side, the Universe is so built up that it has a central source of light and heat. Our sun is one of the many million stars that revolve round the central Sun of the Universe. Astronomers are able to calculate the time when our sun will lose all light and heat and then the system of worlds that depend for their life upon the light and heat of the sun, will turn to nought. Similarly if the central 'Sun' of the Universe comes to an end all the worlds constituting the Universe will come to an end. When in our body one part is liable to suffer, decay and death it leads us to the inference that such decay and death may overtake the whole frame of which one limb or organ is a part. Similarly, if our sun can be reduced to a mass of carbon alone, it may lead us to infer destruction of the central source of life for the Universe and consequential involution at a distant day of all that exists. Although the entire involution of the Universe cannot be seen directly, there is every reason to infer it from an understanding of the process of the world at large. Hence it cannot be affirmed that the Universe is eternal in its cosmic condition.

That the Universe becomes nothing is not the Siddhanta view. Just as when mud vessels are all broken and powdered they become the dust of the earth from which they can be re-made, the Universe is reduced to the unformed Mayaic substratum from which its multitudinous forms may be re-evolved. In the stage of involution the Universe is said to be in its causal condi-

tion and in its evolution it is said to be in its effectual cosmic condition. Hence the Universe never becomes nothing. It is a cardinal principle of Siddhanta that nothing comes out of nothing and something does not become nothing. It is the Buddhist view that everything appears and dies every moment of time and by contact with the preceding the succeeding thing comes into being. Then the question arises whether the succeeding thing takes its origin from a minute portion of that which precedes and dies or out of merely nothing. It is inconceivable that something can arise out of nothing. If the former is the case, then the statement that everything dies leaving nothing is meaningless. And if evolution has a material basis, it must have an intelligent purpose at its back, and we have already shown that such a purpose can be effectuated in the case of the Universe by the one, unseen, intelligent Head of it. Hence the Buddhist theory that evolution takes place without a Creator cannot stand to reason.

The question is often asked whether as the potter making vessels has a place to stand upon the Creator has a place to stand upon a place for Himself to reside. To that the answer is that one should observe how the soul energizes the body without standing outside it and how the great course of time controls the processes of the Universe. There is a theory that Time is the cause of evolution and involution. But this is untenable in the face of the unity of the universe. However great Time may be, it is not an intelligent force and it can only be a tool in the hands of the Supreme Intelligence.

### EVOLUTION

The purpose of evolution is a matter to be investigated. Evolution is said to be the *leela* or playful activity of God. Mere play cannot be an attribute of Providence.

The purpose for which God creates the world cannot be selfish. Unless God is above the influence of desire. His actions cannot be fair and just. God is really independent of Maya. He is self-sufficient. He cannot have any personal gain by evolution. Therefore He should cause it for the benefit of souls. As the result of evolution, souls take their bodies, dwell in them, and leave them, and undergo the cycle of births and deaths. Every body is a microcosm within the macrocosm of the world. What is called creation is providing the soul with body, mind, place and enjoyable things all of which are made of Tattwas evolved from the Mayaic substratum by the agency of God's power. These are instruments for calling into play the knowing, feeling, and doing powers of the soul. Without body and mind, the soul will be immersed in ignorance which is called spiritual darkness. From the state of thralldom in darkness, the soul is led step by step, through the cycle of birth and death to the ultimate goal of contact with God and realization of His bliss. If evolution is needed for providing the soul with energizing implements, involution is needed to provide the soul with required rest after the period of its activity, just as day is required for labour and night for rest. So it is for the benefit of souls that evolution and involution are caused by Providence. Just as after night's rest, one wakes up afresh for finishing labours remaining incomplete, the soul after remaining in rest during involution, rises up with renewed energy at the time of re-evolution for again pursuing its upward course towards God, remaining to be completed at the time of involution. Hence evolution, involution, and re-evolution have the purpose of the spiritual advance of the souls at their root, and these take place not for any personal good of God, but out of

His unsellish mercy for souls.

### CONCEPT OF SOUL

According to the Siddhanta view, souls are as eternal as God and they are not created out of nothing by God. They are not parts of God, because they do not possess qualities of God and are not above the cycle of births and deaths. They cannot be viewed as a group of the five senses, because the five senses have not the passion and activity of the soul, and Prana is not the soul because it does not experience pain and pleasure. The soul undergoes different stages of consciousness during wakeful hours, dreams, deep sleep and suppression of breath. The mind is not the soul, because its several faculties have separate functions which require unification by the soul. A combination of mind, body, and such like implements cannot be soul by itself, because it cannot act without being moved by an intelligent entity. The soul being an intelligent entity, has not a material form inseparable from it. The soul is either an atom nor a force filling the body. It identifies itself with anything that comes in contact and uses it as an instrument, since the senses and the mind help to energize the intelligence of the soul and the organs of activity make the soul active. All these are spoken of as the instruments of the soul without which the soul cannot know and act. But since the instruments are themselves unintelligent, they do not supply intelligence to the soul. The soul's intelligence is rendered dormant by something which these Mayaic instruments remove in part. That something is called Anava or hood of ignorance or darkness. Such ignorance cannot be an inherent quality of the soul which is by itself an intelligent entity. The element of darkness has rendered the soul's intelligence dormant and futile. When the soul takes up its body and mind,

only a portion of the element of darkness is removed. The soul's intelligence is progressively developing with the aid of the said instruments. When it acts in the embodied condition the good and bad results of its actions are termed Karma. Maya as providing instruments for the development of the soul, is an element of brightness and not darkness to the soul but as Maya does not help the soul to realize the Almighty above its level, it is viewed as a bond, limiting the vision of the soul. Since the activity of the soul, when it is in combination with Anava and Maya is not fully directed in the right way, Karma is also said to be one of the bonds which entangle the soul in the results of its actions. Hence Anava, Maya and Karma are said to be the three bonds of the soul which should be got rid of if the soul should rise to the level of God.

The question may arise how the soul can know God. The soul's vision is limited to things evolved from Maya. Whatever is seen in the world, changes and disappears

God cannot be a part of the phenomenon which is evanescent. And if God is never knowable what is the good of God to the soul? God cannot be realized with the aid of mind or senses or any such Mayaic instrument. God's perception is infinite and things of the world are finite. If God knows the world, it must be through His infinite wisdom. His intelligence is all-pervading and the soul can know Him if its vision be connected therewith. The soul has the nature to identify itself with any thing that is duly put to it. When the soul turns away from the World towards God it reaches a stage where God's Sakti or wisdom contacts the soul. In such a stage God lifts up the soul, to His level of wisdom and the soul is then able to realize the Almighty. This lifting up by God is in ordinary parlance said to be the advent of God as Guru to the soul and giving it spiritual enlightenment. The soul blessed with infinite wisdom is the one emancipated from the bonds and able to be the medium of divine communication to others.

## Saiva Siddhanta: an Epitome

SRI D V RAJAN, MADRAS.

Saivism is a branch of Hinduism, followed by a vast number of Hindus who accept Lord Siva as their tutelary deity.

The formless all pervading omnipotent and omniscient God has been given several names by different religions, and such names are qualitative in their nature. Similar is the name Siva derived from Sivem, which means well being peace and bliss. It is the privilege and duty of every embodied soul to work for the attainment of this bliss, by disentangling itself from the ailments and distractioons of life which are the causes of sorrow and suffer-

ing. Diverse though be the colours of the cows, the colour, taste and value of their milk are uniform, even of such a nature is the uniformity in the fundamentals of all faiths with their superficial differences in names and forms.

Saivism is a universal religion, for in the eighth Sutra of Stavasana-Siddhiyar a treatise on Saivism it is stated "That is the true religion, postulate and book, which, not conflicting with this or that has everything within its own folds." The Saivagamas have this characteristic.

Then, elsewhere in the same work, while

exploiting the various stages of one's evolution, it is said "One follows the alien religions, then enters the orthodox fold and plods through the paths of Smritis, Astamas, and their duties, and after practising Charya, Kriya and Yoga he reaches the feet of Siva by means of Jnana. Every one must at one time or other, either in the present life or in the past, must have passed through those various phases of thought and action." So Saivism is broad in its conceptions. There is no reference in Saivite literature to religious tolerance, and this is due to the fact that this faith is based entirely to which we refer when using the word 'tolerance'.

### THREE FUNDAMENTALS

Saiva Siddhanta recognizes three fundamentalas Pati (God), Paau (Soul) and Pasam (Maya). The soul by its very nature is enveloped by Anavam (ego), Maya (illusion) and Karma (deeds) which veil the real nature of the soul and produce in it illusory enjoyments bondage and capacity for experience. These defects, or Malas, as they are called, are only the *defects* and not the qualities of the soul. Karma is the material cause (Mula Karana), bringing about immediate pleasures and pains and therefore is called the cause of Bhoga.

Maya is the cause of bondage and the instrumental cause, —body, senses, etc.,— to enable the soul to enjoy pleasures and pains.

Anava is the cause of Bhoktriva, and as the efficient cause, induces all these for its own removal.

This Anava is much more immediate to the soul than the bran to the rice, and Maya like the husk is useful in removing the bran in pounds.

Saiva Siddhanta considers the soul and Maya as beginningless and endless as the Lord Himself, and God's creation in Siddhanta is therefore limited to His creation

the worlds, the bodies and environments only, according to the varying desires and need of the souls, just as the Potter shapes his wares to suit the tastes and needs of the customers.

Maya is the clay or material cause of the divine Potter. His power the instrumental cause and Himself the efficient cause.

Out of infinite mercy for the souls wailing in sin and sorrow, He wills to save the souls from their misery, and so He acts about this creation to afford opportunities to the souls which by themselves are incapable of finding out the means for enjoyment and thus reaping the fruits of their Karma or actions.

### FOUR PATHS

This Siddhanta has prescribed four paths for God-realization: the Samanya, Sahamarga, Satputramarga and Dasamarga. These are also called Jnana, Yoga, Kriya and Charya Padas or paths.

*Samanya* is the path of service—washing and cleaning and doing other duties in temples, obeying the commands of devotees, etc.

*Sahamarga* is the path of worshiping the symbols of God with flowers, Dhupa (incense), Dipa (light) etc.

Of the Puja ingredients the sandal wood represents Varagya, flowers external virtues, Dnupa or incense the pride to be sacrificed at his feet, Dipa, the light one's lotuslike eyes, water contentment, and food one's egoism.

*Sahamarga* is the Ashtanga Yoga Marga with Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi.

*Samanya* is the process of the assimilation of the essence of Vedas, Puranas and the scriptures of other religions, and finally ratioc all this knowledge as low, and holding to the truth of Tripadartha, finding the path of reaching Siva and realizing the

non-distinction of the knower knowledge and known

In attaining God realization the help and guidance of a Master is considered to be a necessity This no doubt finds universal acceptance in all faiths It is said that the Supreme Being Himself will appear as Guru to the souls in a condition fit to receive His Grace, and will convert His disciples into His form by means of touch thought or sight as a fowl tortoise or fish hatches its eggs After obtaining the Master's grace the soul gets knowledge or wisdom or enlightenment

#### STAGES IN REALIZATION

This enlightenment develops in three stages The *Pasa Jnana*, the first stage, consists of the knowledge of the Vedas, Sastras and similar religious scriptures and the thirty six Tattvas

*Pasa Jnana*, the second stage is the knowledge of the soul when it realizes that it is above these Tattvas

*Pasa Jnana* is the third and the last stage which consists in the soul's identifying itself with the Lord forgetting its own individuality, as water mixes with milk or a river flows into the sea

The process of one's identification with the Supreme is described in ten different steps as follows

(1) First stage is to know the forms of the 36 Tattvas or realities from earth onwards This is *Tattva Rupa*

(2) Second stage is understanding that each Tattva is inert and can only act with the aid of external force This is *Tattva Darshana*

(3) Third stage is the soul's getting itself detached from these Tattvas through Lord's grace This is *Tattva Suddhi*

(4) Fourth stage is feeling oneself as an intelligent being after separating oneself from the Tattvas This is *Atma-Rupa*

(5) Fifth stage is the soul's realization of its dependence on the Almighty's will

This is *Atma-Darshana*

(6) Sixth stage is in the soul's losing itself in Truth and becoming That This is called *Atma-Suddhi*

(7) Seventh stage is the soul's knowing that God would be pleased to take it to His side as it has now freed itself from the Indriyas This is *Siva Rupa*.

(8) Eighth stage is the understanding of the soul that it cannot exist without God's grace This is *Siva Darshana*

(9) Ninth stage is the soul's identifying itself with the Lord This is *Sita-Yoga*

(10) The last stage is reached when the soul is immersed in bliss This is *Bija Bhoga*

The highest injunction in Saiva Siddhanta is to 'stand still,' do God's bidding and become one with Him So long as there is the play of one's egoism, the superior light cannot be beheld Saint Tirumular, a Saivite saint, says

'Oh ye fools ! who attempt to seek  
of the unspeakable  
Can you find the limits of the limitless  
deep ?

To him who attains rest as the  
waveless sea,  
Will the Lord of the Braided Hair  
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Herein lies the fundamental unity among the teachings in the scriptures of the East and the West A proper understanding of these fundamentals will no doubt bring the solidarity and Fellowship of World Faiths

Apart from their spiritual importance the works on Saiva Siddhanta and the mystic poetry of Saivite Saints have a special literary value The terseness of 'Sivajnana Bodham' the illustrations of 'Sivajnana Siddhi' the lyric beauties of 'Thevaram' and 'Thiruvachagam' the epic grandeur of 'Periapuranam' and the rhythmic and subtle exposition of the philosophy in 'Kandar Kalivembu' have endeared Tamil literature to lovers of Philosophy and even to foreign savants.

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# Veerasaiva Philosophy and Sivayoga

SRI KUMARASWAMI  
[Navakalyan Mutt, Dharwar]

Veerasaivism, historically considered, is a fine and full blown flower of Saivism. Saivism has a history going back to the Chalcolithic age taking its place as the most ancient living faith. Veerasaivism is considered to be a phase of the Agamanta. As wearing of Linga, the symbol of God, on the body of each person is the distinctive mark of Veerasaivism it is sometimes known as Lingayatism. In the 12th century, in Karnataka there was a galaxy of Lingayat or Veerasaiva saints known as Saranas. The number of these saints ranged from two to three hundred, amongst whom there were about 60 women mystics, of whom Akka Mahadevi was the beaconlight. Basava and Allamaprabhu were the two distinguished names that shone in the firmament of Lingayat faith. It was they who dominated all the saints and gave a decisive turn to the renaissance of the 12th century. The saints have sung their realization in different strains and expressed their views and opinions on men and society in varied sayings. The collection of these sayings is known as The Vachana Sastra 'the scripture of the Lingayat faith'. The sayings of Basava are characterized by the sublimation of elegance the apotheosis of merit and the transfiguration of grace. But on reading the sayings of Allamaprabhu we seem to be the spectators of the Life Drama and onlookers of a master spirit's progress and development through the stress and stir of the eternal yea and nay. The spirit of detachment and idealism is manifested throughout his sayings, whose cryptic expression surpasses in a way that of Carlyle in Sartor Resartus, Shakespeare in the Sonnets or Tennyson in In Memorium.

The Veerasaiva saint addresses God as Siva Linga or Sthala. The Veerasaiva

philosopher defines Siva Linga or Sthala as the source and support of all phenomenal existence, as the ground and goal of all terrestrial evolution. Empirical reality is the imperfect unfolding in time of an eternally complete and self-existent Being or Sthala. Sthala is therefore the infinite and eternal Rest into which all motion and dialectics are absorbed. The ultimate expression of this eternal Being is self-consciousness or the unity of apperception of Kani. The question now arises Is this thought-unity, from which Kant starts, really ultimate? Does not consciousness presuppose that which becomes conscious? We believe that it is. The synthetic unity of consciousness, the logical element presupposes the a logical element the 'I' or the principle which becomes unified. This principle of I means or 'Ahamta' when considered 'pratya' may be regarded as matter, of which thought or consciousness is the form. Most of the leaders of philosophic speculation from Plato to Hegel have ignored this material moment and an appearance of having transcended the distinction has been obtained by the hypostasis of form. But the Veerasaiva philosopher does not abstract the unifying thought form the Logos, from its a logical matter, the Hyle. He contends that the ultimate all penetrating material moment gives us the aspect of being which is Siva, the principle of Ego, the formal and actual moment gives us the aspect of knowing which is Sakti which is not ego but ego's consciousness of itself. If philosophy is the rational explanation of the world and if self consciousness is its ground and goal the study of the self-existent Truth reveals a double aspect of being and knowing, of Siva and Sakti, of ego and

ego's consciousness of itself

This distinction between the material and potential moment of being, and the formal and actual moment of knowing seems at first sight a subtlety which may have little philosophical value and certainly no practical importance. But we shall endeavour to show that it does, as a matter of fact give a colouring to the whole course of thought. In the speculative or generic method, which deals with a process out of relation to time the starting point is also the goal the beginning and the end meet, as in a circle. The ultimate principle which involves and includes all others is necessarily the determinant factor of the entire system. Hence whether that principle be formal or material logical or a logical makes a profound difference and decides indeed the whole character of the system. And these two processes of knowing and being confront each other as the two independent modes of thought that crystallize themselves in the Upanishads and Agamas. Here the Veerasaiva philosopher intervenes to strike a balance between these two modes. He does not visualize an incurable antinomy between being and knowing. Siva and Sakti rather he effects a synthesis by saying that Sakti is the very soul of Siva, that knowing is inherent in being. He thus envisages an integral association between Siva and Sakti, which he terms Sakti-Visistaadvaita.

Now we come to the practical side of Veerasaivism. The means by which we are to embody the integral view of Reality is called Sivayoga. Yoga primarily means meditation and only in a technical sense it means union or joining. Sivayoga means meditation on Siva in the form of Linga. In mathematics the centre of a circle or a triangle is called Bindu or a point, similarly, the centre of physical

body is termed Bindu. This Bindu is the pineal gland which is situated centrally behind the third ventricle in the brain. This pineal gland is the seat of cosmic thought or Mahat. The Linga which represents this Mahat is called Mihalinga.

When the eye sees a form and the ear hears a sound and the senses receive their corresponding objects, what happens is that the point or Bindu in the physical body emits energy, which takes by reflection the form of different objects, without the emission of Bindu no object can be felt or received by the mind. So long as objects are received through the senses one is not free from distraction, with the elimination of all distractions the sensorium ceases its activity, and serenity prevails. When the contact between the sense and the object is cut asunder, there occurs a timeless state of consciousness where the seer or Purusha resists to his native home, the pineal gland.

The whole process of Sivayoga is directed to the awakening of the dormant pineal gland. It is a rudimentary organ. Yet it is slowly evolving. It is possible to quicken its evolution into a condition in which it can perform the function of apprehending events comprehensively and not piecemeal. It is the organ for cosmic consciousness as much as the eye is an organ of vision or the ear of hearing. The full development of this organ helps the Yogi to transcend time, which is only an illusion produced by the successive states of consciousness as one travels through eternal duration. In Yoga Sastra this pineal gland is spoken of as the third eye and the function of this eye takes place externally through the middle of the forehead which is marked by the Hindu with a Tilaka or a spot. Here, in the symbolic representation of Siva we see in the middle of his forehead an open,

ing with red flames issuing therefrom This third eye in man is airophied because the tendency of man is downward and immerad in asexual pleasurea This eye and the Kamic organs are said to be like the two pans of a balance, one of which has to kick the beam when the other grows heavy. Wheo wo outgrow Kama or fiat and make it as light as poasible, this third eye will then open, and this gland will flower out into brillianc

If anyone meditates on a single idea with sustained attention he becomes unconscious of a slight quiver in the pineal gland The quiver takes place in the ether or aetherachnoid space, which permeates the gland and causes a slight magnetic current which give arise to the creeping sensation in the dense molecules of the gland If the thought is strong enough to cause a violent current, then the creeping sensation changes to a leaping one, which strikes the gland with a blow sufficient to galvanize it into activity Then it rapidly awakens and begins to vibrate with vertiginous rapidity, this vivid vibration raises the power of thought to a superlative degree Motion is the source of everything, and life is motion the motion affecting matter is vibration Motion arises when the one becomes many But if the motion is rhythmic it is health, life, consciousness, if it is unrhythmic, it is disease, death unconsciousness Life and death, consciousness and unconsciousness are twin aspects alike, born of motion, which is manifestation In this manifested universe we are surrounded by matter of different density, and we name the motions in it as they affect ourselves We name as light certain motions affecting the eye, we name as some other sensation certain other motions affecting another organ or mind.

Mind is the result of past sensations and impressions and is constantly being modified by the present ones The saying that wo know only our impressions of things but not the things-in-themselves is true regarding the activity of the sense-mind Very different would be our ideas of the world if we could know it as it is, instead of knowing it by means of vibrations modifid by the mind And this is by no means impossible, since it can be accomplished by galvanizing into activity the pineal gland which is the organ of thought The Yogi who has developed the pineal gland to the full extent can apprehend the idea in the world of commona of which the form expresses only a phenomenal aspect His vision penetrates through the usual, fysical world which is the matrix of the phenomenal forms and names, only because his self abides in the pineal gland and works therefrom untrammelled by the concrete mind

'Lingapuja' is the means to achieve the control of cosmic thought The mode of worship is to meditate on Linga placed in the left palm of the hand, so raised as to come in a line with the centre of the eyebrows With half closed eyes, the Yogi fixes his attention on Linga, the coating of which is shining blue-black, serving to widen and deepen concentration The concentrated gaze generates psychic heat, which stirs into activity the pineal gland, that produces psychic light, which, in turn, leads to the release of thought force that is at once a power of vision and execution Sivayoga therefore, leads one to a region of effective will and intuitive knowledge, where to will is to create and to think is to see This is the secret and significance of Sivayoga.

# Vaishnavism

DEWAN BAHADUR SRI K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

## I INTRODUCTORY

Vaishnavism is one of the liveliest efflorescences of Hinduism. It is as deeply imbedded in the Vedas just as Saivism is. The modern attempts to make Shiva a so called pre-Vedic or non-Vedic God or make Vishnu a belated arrival in the Hindu pantheon, wherein he was a mere minor solar deity far below the others in importance till he shot up in public estimation and worship owing to propaganda or other adventitious causes or owing to the charm of the doctrine of Avatara or incarnation particularly connected with Him, have no real truth or pith or marrow or substance thereto despite the authority of the names of great sages and scholars.

It is no doubt true that as the Vaishnava cult or sect came to be developed by many saints sages and seers in the course of centuries the simple basic creed, ethos, ritual and epos of the most ancient times had many additions of dogma and ever increasing ritual sharply differentiated from the rituals and stories of other Hindu religious cults and sects till at last it announced itself as the only real religion of salvation implying and sometimes even expressly stating that all other approaches to God are wrong and misleading if not mischievous and false. This is a fate that overtakes all faiths and religions all sects and cults. But the Vaishnava religion literature during many millennia has attained such astonishing width and height and such dazzling and bewitching and fascinating beauty that one stands amazed and bewildered by it and feels afraid to summarize it and capture and expound its essence.

## II VAISHNAVISM IN THE SOURCES OF HINDUISM

Though the main bulk of the hymns in the Rig Veda relate to Indra, Vayu, Agni, Varuna and other gods, it is not right to call their worship as some kind of polytheism or as worship of personifications of Nature or to say that Vishnu was a mere minor God at that time. Nor is it right to say that Vishnu was only the sun God or that the three strides of Vishnu (त्रिष्टुप् निरूपे पदम्) relate only to the sun at sunrise and at noon and at sunset.

There is a specific Vedic declaration that Vishnu is the greatest of the gods and that Agni is the smallest of them (त्रिष्टुप् पदम् ग्रन्थरम्). The Purusha Sookta, Shoo Sookta, Sree Sookta and Neela Sookta glorify Vishnu and His Shaktis. The fact is that the Vedic seers saw the one Almighty God as the infinite, eternal and supreme Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of the entire Cosmos. They were thus monotheists in the highest sense of the word. They were also aware that God is Supreme Energy (Shakti) and Bliss (Satchidananda) is beyond name and form and yet has also many names and forms to draw all human minds and hearts unto Himself.

Professor Max Muller was puzzled by every god being called the highest God who can bestow all gifts. He called this view as henotheism or kathenotheism. This attitude was not due to any spirit of flattery or pseudo praise but was due to a realization that there was but one God with many names and that the subordinate deities in charge of limited cosmic functions were only limbs or aspects of the One God.



Sri K. S. RamaSwami Sastri speaking at one of the sessions of the Parliament of Religions.

एक उद्दिष्टा वटुधा वर्दन्ति ।

अग्निं यमं मातृस्थानमाहुः ॥

—Rigveda I - 164, 46.

उ ब्रह्मा उ शिव उ हरि. से-२: शोऽत्मृतः परमः स्वप्नः ।

—Purusha Sukta.

It is wrong to judge the eminence of a deity by the number of Rig Vedic hymns in his honour. Quite naturally in sacrifices which were performed for this or that benefaction a particular deity was invoked for such a purpose. In the Upanishads where the aim is salvation and beatitude, the prayers to Vishnu and Siva naturally predominate. In the Itihasas, Puranas and Agamas, which amplified the teachings of the Vedas about salvation and beatitude, the same predominance is naturally found.

तदिष्प्योः परम् पृष्ठं सदा पश्यन्ति यथः ।  
शोऽत्मृतः पारमांनीति तदिष्प्योः परम् परम् ॥  
उमात्मापृष्ठं परमेश्वरं प्रभुं त्रिलोचनं नीलकण्ठं प्रश्यन्तम् ।

यो देवानां प्रमवधो द्वयथ विभादिषो द्वद्वी महापि ।  
सर्वेषामपि स भगवान् [उमात्मापृष्ठः] (यथः ॥)

The exaltation of Siva or Vishnu in the Vedas, the Itihasas, the Puranas and the Agamas as the one, eternal, infinite supreme God does not mean any sectarian attitude as in later times—especially in the medieval and modern times. The 'Nahi Ninde Nyaya,' i.e., that the exaltation was not to dispraise but to intensify Bhakti or devotion, was well kept in mind, and the Vedic declaration about the unity of God and the diversity of His names and forms was never forgotten then. Each name merely emphasizes one aspect or quality of God, and each form is God's true form to satisfy a devotee's cravings and bestow grace upon him. Thus the name Vishnu emphasizes the all-pervasiveness or omnipresence of God, and the name Siva emphasizes his supreme graciousness and auspiciousness.

It is true that the ten chief Upanishads mention mostly Brahman or Atman or Purushas.

The Brahma Sutras also refer to Brahman. But the other Upanishads the Puranas, the Itihasas and the Agamas give us a synthesized and comprehensive view of both Vaishnavism and Saivism. The Bhagavad Gita which is the crest jewel of the Mahabharata gives us the essence of the Upanishads and presents to us Vaishnavism in its broadest and loftiest form, and places a special emphasis on the name Purushottama.

The most beautiful and sublime expressions of the concept of Avatara or incarnation is given in the Gita and the Bhagavata. Equally sublime is the emphasis

on the concept in Valmiki's immortal epic *Ramayana*. It is especially because of these epics that Vaishnavism, and especially the adoration of Rama and Krishna as integral portions of Vaishnavism, have attained a remarkable hold on millions of human beings during millennia in the course of untold ages. The Vishnu Purana, the Hari Vasans, and other Vaishnava Puranas as well as the Pancharatra and Vaikhanasa Agamas intensified such hold and contributed to the spread of Vaishnavism. Later on the mystic devotional hymns by great saints in various Indian languages and especially the Tamil hymns of the Alwars and the philosophic exposition of Sri Ramanuja and other great Vaishnava philosophers who followed in his wake, intensified the hold still further and contributed to the spread of a Vaishnavism in a progressively wider scale.

### III THE ESSENCE OF VAISHNAVISM

It will not be possible in this thesis to recount in full the vast development of Vaishnavism in the course of millennia. The Bhagavata cult is a very ancient one and its final efflorescence was in Vaishnavism. The word 'Vaishnava' occurs often in the Vishnu Purana, the Bhagavata, etc. The most distinctive characteristic is its exaltation of Devotion (call it as Bhakti or Prapatti, or Prema, or Dasya, Sakhya, Vatsalya and Madhurya Bhavas, as you will). To this concept are added other vital concepts such as Nishkama Karma or selfless work, Kainkarya, Ahimsa, Dhyana, Jnana, etc. But the basic, essential and vital concept is that God is Rasa (sweetness), Ananda (bliss), etc.

It is a bare truth to say that the spread of Vaishnavism has always gone hand in hand with avoidance of flesh and wine, with moral purity, with social service, with emphasis on Mantras, with temple worship, with reverence for Gurus and

Acharyas, with Bhajan and Sankirtan (congregational prayer and worship and music) and with the blossoming of the various fine arts.

### IV THE LATER VAISHNAVISM IN SOUTH INDIA

As Sanskrit became more and more the language of pundits and the upper classes, an urge was felt in the national mind all over India to take the divine essence of Hinduism—especially in its aspects of Vaishnavism, Saivism and Saktism—into the nooks and corners of India and into all homes and hearts to purify, sustain and exalt the spirit of man.

The earliest and most moving and captivating exposition of Vaishnava Mysticism was in the exalted and entrancing Tamil hymns of the Alwars collected under the description *Nalayira Divya Prabandham*. Though the lives of the Alwars as embodied in books and believed by orthodox Tamil Vaishnavas extend over millennia and the earliest three of the twelve Alwars (*Poyya Alwar*, *Boothsaihalwar* and *Peyalwar*) are said to have belonged to the Dwapara Yuga modern literary research has uncontestedly established that the earliest Alwars probably belonged to the third century A.D.

The other Alwars are *Tirumazhisai Alwar* (5th century A.D.), *Nammalwar* who was the greatest of all the Alwars (5th or 6th century A.D.), *Madurakavi Alwar* (5th or 6th century A.D.), *Tirumangai Alwar* (6th or 7th century A.D.), *Thondaradipodi Alwar* (7th century A.D.), *Tiuppanalwar* who belonged to the Harijan caste, *Kulasekhara Alwar* (7th century A.D.), *Penalwar* (8th century A.D.) and *Sri Andal* (8th century A.D.).

The same period (3rd century A.D. to 9th century A.D.) saw also the efflorescence of Saiva mystical poetry. The fact is that both in North India and South India Buddhism and Jainism—which at one time

and nearly five or six centuries overwhelmed Hinduism (of which they were reforming and protestant sects) by reason of their high ethos which they borrowed from Hinduism and sublimated, and by their denunciation of the caste system and sacrifices, and by their admission of Sudras and women to monkhood and nunhood—lost their hold over the national mind and heart because of their non-affirmation of God and devotion to Him. They were unable to destroy the caste system but removed caste arrogances and soothed caste asperities.

#### COUNTER REFORMATION

The times were ripe for a counter-reformation. In Tamil Nad, Saiva and Vaishnava mystical religious poetry effected such a counter revolution. The people as a whole maintained the caste system in a new and purified form, and sacrifices became less and less. Hinduism absorbed the high ethos and especially the doctrine of Ahimsa—of Buddhism and Jainism. The love of God came back into Hinduism with a sudden rebound and Buddhism and Jainism faded away from India though they struck strong roots in Burma, Ceylon, Indonesia, Melaya, China and Japan.

This counter revolution having been effected by Saiva and Vaishnava devotional poetry it is no wonder that in such reformed Hinduism two most powerful branches are Saivism and Vaishnavism, and that Hinduism today tends to be equilibrated with them, though they have an anthropomorphic emphasis on divine names and forms and have tended to sift away from each other by fierce polemics, in an attempt to disrupt the ancient and pristine unity and integrality of Hinduism.

We need not wonder at the captivation of the national mind and heart by the new

Saiva and Vaishnava mystical poetry. The fact is that in the Prakrit dialects, which were the patriarchs of the modern North and West Indian languages, and in the South Indian Dravidian languages, there was a potency of moving, stirring and captivating spiritual emotion, far deeper intensity than what we find in the source books of Hinduism in Sanskrit.

Sanskrit is a highly intellectual language which was an excellent vehicle and medium of philosophical thought. Even in its hymns the intellectual element is dominant. But in the devotional poetry in the modern Indian languages we have a peerless expression of deeply moving devotional passion. Especially is this trait noticeable in Tamil mystical poetry, because the South Indian mind excelled in the fine arts, and especially in architecture and sculpture, and in the interfusion of poetry and song and profound spiritual emotion. The infinite passion and the pain of finite hearts that yearn for God were expressed in these in a way which defies both analysis and imitation. In these musical poems the quest of God assumed an incandescent glow, warmth and intensity not seen before or since in any other literature.

#### BHASKARA AND YADAVA

There were some philosophers posterior to Sri Sankara and prior to Sri Ramanuja. In my monograph of Sri Sankara I have shown how he belonged to the first century BC. Among the above-said thinkers a brief mention should be made of Bhaskara and Yadava Prakasa. Bhaskara probably belonged to the 9th century AD (about 841 AD). He combated Sri Sankara's doctrine of Maya and Jivan mukti. He propounded the philosophy of Bhedabheda and said that the one Brahman is imminent in the variety of objects and beings in the

universe, and yet transcends it and is free from the limitations of all manifestations. The Jiva can transcend the limitations inherent in the universe and become one with Brahman.

Bhaskara does not accept the view that the universe is abhulted in Jnana. He pronounces the Satkarya Vada and affirms the reality of the universe which is a Parinama or evolution of Brahman through the instrumentality of Upahita like the web produced by the spider out of itself. The philosophy of Yadava Prakasa 11th century A.D., who was Sri Ramanuja's teacher and whose teaching Sri Ramanuja rejected, held views similar to that of Bhaskara. He rejected the Adwaitic doctrine of the illusiveness of the world (Vivarta Vada) and affirmed the concept of evolution (Parinama). Brahman becomes the universe by means of Upadhis (finishing causes which He willed to be generated by reason of His peerless and inscrutable power (Sakti)). Both Bhaskara and Yadava say that the combination of Jnana and Karma (Jnana Karma Samuchchaya) leads to liberation. Bhaskara thinks that in Mukti, Upadhis are broken, and the soul and the oversoul are one. But Yadava thinks that the Bhedabheda consciousness persists in Mukti.

#### RAMANUJA

It is only when we remember this background that we can properly appraise and weigh the later formulations of the high and exalted philosophy of Vaishnavism. Sri Ramanuja (1017-1137 A.D.) drew as much inspiration from the Vaishnava mythical poetry in Tamil as from the Upanishads, the Gita and the Brahma Sutras (which are compendiously called the Prasthanatraya) and the Puranas, the Itihasas and the Agamas. It is in his writings that we have a clear formulation of the Vaishnava the Visishtadvaita

system of philosophy. In it we have a clear description of Prapatti (devotional self-surrender to God) as the easiest and surest and best means of salvation.

The concept of Nyasa or Prapatti was an old one but it was given a new extension and a new intensity by the Alwars. Through many Vaishnava philosophers and theologians came later on to elaborate Vaishnavism still further. Sri Ramanuja is the real backbone of Vaishnavism. He gave it a clear philosophic basis and formulation which have settled the lines of its evolution ever since his time.

Sri Ramanuja rejected the Bhedabheda doctrine. He regarded this view to be self-contradictory and said that if the Jiva was only a limitation of Brahman by Upadhi (limiting adjunct), Brahman would be affected by the finitization and its defects, and further the Jivas would become non distinct from one another. His philosophy is Visishtadvaita which affirms the oneness of God, God being Saguna or full of infinite auspicious attributes and not Nirguna. Chit (souls) are atomic (Anu) in their nature and are infinite in number. Achit (matter) and Chit form the Sarira (body) of God. The body is subtle before creation and becomes gross and manifest at creation by God's will. God's creation is to give a chance to the souls to attain liberation (Mukti). Mukti is attainable by Bhakti and Prapatti. Bhakti being limited to the twice-born while Prapatti is easy and is open to all. God Vishnu's Vaikunta (Paradise) is Aprakrti or Suddha Sattva in its nature. All souls have equal and infinite bliss there in a state of Mukti.

Sri Ramanuja was preceded by great thinkers like Nathamuni Pundarikaksha and Yamunacharya and was succeeded by many great thinkers. All of them accepted not only the Vedas but also the Pancharatra

Agamas and the hymns of the Alwars as equally valid and venerable authorities, deporting in this as in philosophical ideas from Sri Sankaracharya. The scheme of Truth and means and salvation was succinctly called Tatiwa Hita Purushartha.

#### RAMANUJA'S SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Sri Ramanuja's special contributions to the treasury of Hindu religious philosophy were his concept of Sarira Sariri Bhava (matter and souls being the body of God) and his concept of the soul's attribute, Dharmashhuta Jnana i.e., consciousness which is now limited by Karma bonds but which in itself is infinite and reveals the glory of God when salvation, i.e., release from the bondage of Karma is attained by the power of Bhakti or Prapatti. Karma should be sublimated into Kainkarya (consecrated and dedicated service of God). The Sarira Sariri concept is the essence of the concept of Antaryami (immanent or indwelling Being) in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.

Sri Ramanuja affirmed the reality of the world, the world being the training ground for the achievement of salvation and liberation and God being the efficient cause (Nimitta Karana) and the material cause (Upadana Karana) of the universe.

Another vital concept is that God reveals Himself in five aspects viz (transcendent) in Vaikunta or Paradise Vynha (world guiding manifestations viz Vasudeva Sankarshana Pradyumna and Anirudha) Vishva (incarnation) Antaryami (in dwelling and immanent guide in every heart) and Archa (image).

Vaisnavism attaches a special importance to image worship as a powerful and never failing means of attaining the grace of God in Paradise the soul can attain Salokya (being in Paradise) Sameepya (nearness to God) Sroopya (similarity of form) and Sayujya (equality of infinite

bliss), but not merger or identity with God. The functions of Jagat Vyapari (of world rule) and Lakshmi patitiwa being the Lord of Lakshmi) belong to God Vishnu alone. Lakshmi is the Purnashakara or active mediatrix leading souls to God and God to souls.

Thus Ramanuja's Visishtadvaita is a unique system of ethical and emotional theism and is one of the high peaks of Indian religious thought. We are not here concerned with his reputation of Sri Sankaracharya's doctrines of Jagannithya (unreality of the world) and the identity of God and soul or the counter refutations to his refutation. Sri Sankara took his stand on the Mahavakyas viz Prajnanam Brahma Tat tvam Asi Ayam Atma Brahma, and Aham Brahmasmi and viewed the gap between Brahman and Creation by his doctrine of Anirvachaniya and Mithya. It will be neither possible nor desirable to go into these subtle discussions here.

#### VADAGALAI AND THENGALAI SECTS

Among the great successors of Sri Ramanuja Sri Vedanta Desika stands out as the pre eminent teacher of the Vadagalai sect of Southern Vaishnavism while Pillai Lokacharya and Manavala Mahamuni stand out as the pre eminent teachers of the Then galai sect. There are 18 divergences of doctrine (Ashtadasa Bhedas) between the two sects. Sri Vedanta Desika (1268-1369 AD) was a great poet and dramatist in addition to his being a great philosopher and theologian. His Sanskrit poem 'Yada vahyudaya' and his Sanskrit drama 'Sankatpa Suryodaya' are full of extraordinary poetic beauty and dramatic vigour. In his great work 'Rahasyatraya Sara' he has expounded in Tamil the holy eight syllabled Mantra (Om Namo Narayanaaya) the hoty Dwaya Mantra (Sri Narayana Charanau Saras nam Prapadye Sri man Narayanaaya Namaha) and the Charama (final) verses in the Bhaga

vad Gita (Man Mana Bhava Mad Bhakta, etc.) He has left over a hundred eminent works

The words 'Vadagalai' (Northern school) and 'Thengalai' (Southern School) merely mean as a matter of equal emphasis on the Sanskrit scriptures and the hymns of the Alwars or a special emphasis on the latter. On Namalwar's Tiruvoimozhi (Tamil hymns) there are various commentaries written in the Manipravala style (a kind of Sanskritized Tamil). The first commentary called Arayirapadi (6000) was composed under Sri Ramanuja's guidance. The second commentary was Onpathinayirappadi (9000) by Nanjiyer. The third gloss was Trupathunaiyirappadi (24000) by Peria Vachan Pillai. The last gloss was Allupa tharayirappadi (36000) by Vadaku Tiruveethi Pillai. Pillai Lokacharya (1264-1327) was the son of Vadaku Tiruveedi Pillai. He wrote Arthapanchaka, Tattwa Naya, Sri Vachana Bhooshana, etc. His successor Manavala Mahamuni (1370-1443 A.D.) is revered by the Thengalais as their greatest Acharya.

There is a slight difference in the caste marks of the Vadagalais and the Thengalais. The sub-sects differ also in what is called Patram i.e., a verse setting forth the Acharya's name. The Vadagalais utter Ramanuja daya patram whereas the Thengalais utter Srisaileaa-daya patram (Srisaileesa being the Guru of Manavala Mahamuni). These are minor matters. Among the major differences of doctrine (out of the 78 differences) a few may be mentioned here. To the Vadagalais Lakshmi and Vishnu together form God. To the latter (Thengalais) Vishnu alone is God, Sri being a Jiva, though the greatest of Jivas. The Vadagalais hold that Bhakti and Prapatti are equally efficacious though the latter is easier. But the Thengalais hold that Prapatti alone is the surest and best means of salvation. The Vada-

galais hold that God's Vatsalya (love) removes the Doshas (delects) of Jiva. The Thengalais hold that God delights in the Doshas and bestows bliss out of his infinite grace voluntarily irrespective of human striving and effort. The Vadagalais insist on the doing of Swadharma even after Prapatti. The Thengalais hold this to be unnecessary.

#### V THE LATER VAISHNAVISM IN SOUTH INDIA (*Continued*) MADHWACHARYA'S DWAITA SYSTEM

Just as Sri Ramanujacharya formulated the Visishtadwaita system of philosophy, Sri Madhwacharya (1199-1278 A.D.) formulated the Dwaita system which was a system of realism and pluralism and theism. The Mahavakya of Taittwamasi is stated by him to be Atatiwamas (Thou art not that). According to him, there are two categories of being viz., (1) independent (Swatantra), i.e., Vishnu and (2) dependent (Aawantantra), i.e., Matter and Souls. Sri Madhwa affirms Panchahedha (five differences) i.e., the difference between God and Souls, God and Matter, Soul from Soul, Soul from Matter and Matter from Matter. Lakshmi is the supreme Jiva. Bhakti is the means of the soul's salvation.

The high place given to god Vayu in the pantheon above Siva, Indra and others is another peculiarity in Sri Madhwa's system. The one peculiarity in Sri Madhwa's system is the concept of Taratamya i.e., that there is a gradation of bliss even in the state of Mukti (liberation in Paradise). Another peculiarity is that God is only the efficient cause (Nimitta Karana) of the world. Prakriti being the material cause. In this respect he differs from Sri Sankara and Sri Ramanuja.

Another peculiarity is his concept of inherent and ineradicable diversity of souls, viz., Mukti Yogyas (souls eligible for salvation) and Nitya Narakis (eternal).

demand souls) it is not possible to go in this brief sketch into the question whether the source-books of Hinduism bear out these views in all their details. The clearest and briefest summing up of the Dwaita system is in the following verse:

श्रीमद्भगवते हरिः परतः सत्यं जातस्वतो  
भेदे जीवाणा हृतरुचय नीचोभावं गतः ।  
मुकिन्नेजुम्मानुभूतिरमला भक्तिरुच तत्साधनं  
हृतादि प्रियं प्रमाणमिलाभ्यायैकरेयो हरिः ॥

(In Madhva's system Hart is the Supreme God. The world is real. Every being is different from all others. All are the servants of God. There is a gradation of souls. Salvation [Mukti] is the enjoyment of the soul's inherent, exclusive bliss. Devotion is the means to Mukti. The Pramanas or sources of knowledge are three, viz., perception, inference and scripture. All the scriptures teach of the Glory of God Hart.)

## VI LATER VAISHNAVISM IN SOUTH INDIA

### NIMBARKA'S DWAITA ADWAITA SYSTEM

Nimbarka, who was born in Andhra Desa after Sri Ramanuja developed a Dwaita Adwaita system of thought which is midway between Yadava Prakasa's Bhedabheda system and Sri Ramanuja's Visishtadwaita system. His Bharadvya, 'Vedanta Parijata Saurabha' on the Brahme Sutras is a great work. According to him, Brahman and Chit or Jiva and Achit are real and co-eternal. Brahman is Saguna as well as Nirguna. Brahman is not exhausted in the universe but transcends it. Jiva is one with Brahman and yet distinct from it. God is the material cause and also the efficient cause of the universe. The universe is not unreal or illusory but is a true manifestation and modification (Parinamsa) of Brahman though it is mutable and dependent on Brahman. Thus the universe is one with Brahman and is yet distinct from

it, just as a wave or a bubble is the same water, and yet, at the same time, different from the ocean. The soul is a part of Brahman and is yet one with it. In emancipation the liberated soul shines in its own glory but feels united with Brahman, though with his individuality intact. In such Mukta state, though he enjoys the bliss of Brahman, Brahman alone has Jagadvyapara (creation and preservation and destruction of the universe).

Thus Nimbarka gives equal importance to the doctrine stated in Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (II, 3, 1) 'Two forms of Brahman there are indeed, the material and the immaterial, the noo-eternal and the eternal, the moving and the immovable, the seen and the unseen. What is meant by these descriptions are the phenomena and the Noumenon. Who so the mind is in relation to the sensus, the phenomena is experienced, but who so the mind is transcended, the Noumenon is experienced. The latter's experience is tasted in deep sleep (Sushupti), but in it there is also the element of unconsciousness. It can be fully enjoyed in Turya or Samadhi; where in the object merges in the subject, and hence there is a merger of all phenomena in the Noumenon. This experience is described in the Mandukya Upanishad as well as in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (IV, 8, 15). Thus in meditation on God we begin with a sense of the separateness of God and soul and end in the merger of the soul in God in Samadhi. This state is described also in the Brahma Sutras.

## VII LATER VAISHNAVISM IN WEST INDIA

In Western India and especially in Maharashtra Vishnavism attained a special development from the 13th century A.D. Janardan, Namadev, Ekanath, Tukaram and Samartha Ramdas are its supreme exponents. The peculiarity of Maharashtra mysticism



Lord Krishna who gave to the world His Immortal Message on universal ethics, philosophy and religion in the form of the Bhagavat Gita and who is worshipped by millions of Hindus.

The gullet  
stūpa of Lord  
Buddha in the  
Malaniya temple  
near Colombo  
Buddha was  
in anu  
personal



B  
U  
D  
D  
H  
I  
S  
M

C  
H  
R  
I  
S  
T  
I  
A  
N  
I  
T  
Y



Holy Jesus Christ  
whose life was His  
Message and the  
best interpretation  
of Christian ideals

is that it is a bridge between Adwaita-Jnana and Dwaitic Bhakti and that is emphasized Bhajan. The Psalms of the West Indian mystics are called Abhenges. They were devotees of Lord Vitthu (Panduranga) of Pandarpur. Jnaneswar's Jnaneswari is a very popular expansion of the Bhagavad Gita in the Marathi dialect. The Maharashtra Vaishnava saints identify the Nirguna Brahman (the Blissful Attribute) of the Jnani and the Saguna Brahman (Personal God) of the devotee (Bhakta). They say that in the bliss of liberation the soul's sense of individuality vanishes. Thus in Maharashtra Vaishnava-mysticism there is a reconciliation of Bhakti and Jnana, of Kainkarya and Karma Sanyasa, of Saguna Brahman and Nirguna Brahman, and of monism and pluralism.

### VIII. LATER VAISHNAVISM IN CENTRAL INDIA

Vallabhacharya (1473-1531), the founder of the Suddha Adwaita system, was born in the Central Provinces (Madhya Pradesh). He attacked Sri Sankara's Maya doctrine and called his system as Suddha Adwaita, i.e., Adwaita purified of the concept of Maya. He accepted as basic source-books not only the Prasthanas-Trays, i.e., the Upanishads and the Gita and the Brahmasutras, but also Bhagavata, thus resorting to Prasthanachatushiaya. He said that in cases of doubt the help of the Prasthanas next in order should be taken, viz., the doubts in the Vedas should be removed in the light of the Gita, those in the Gita in the light of the Brahmasutras, and those in the Brahmasutras in the light of the Bhagavata. The Bhagavata embodies all the experiences of Vyasa in meditation and is hence called the Samadhi-bhasha. Vallabhacharya's Bhashya on the Brahmasutras is called Anuhashya. It is available only up to III, 233, the remainder being the work of his son Vittalanathji. There is a tradition

that he wrote a Brihad (big) Bhashya on the Brahmasutras.

Vallabhacharya says that Brahman is Sat, Chit, Ananda and Rasa, and is Purna Purushottama who is a personal God and whose form is full of infinite Ananda (bliss). God is the material cause, and the efficient cause of the world and the creation is due to his Leela (sport). Brahmen does not undergo any change despite the emergent evolution of the universe. This is doctrine of Avikritaparinama. Next in order, to Purna Purushottama, Vallabhacharya postulates also an Akshara Brahman who appears as Prakrti (primordial matter) and Purusha (Soul). Prakrti finally evolves into Jagat (the manifested universe). He propounds 28 Tattwas (categories).

Vallabhacharya says that the negative description in the Upanishads (Asthavakra, etc.) refute only to the Akshara Brahman. From Akshara Brahman an infinite number of souls sprang forth like sparks from a blazing fire. The souls (Jiva) are Anu (atomic) in their nature and are eternal and Amsas (parts) of Brahman. The Ananda Amsa of the soul disappeared because of the bondage of Karma and can shine forth only because of devotion (Bhakti). Three classes of souls, viz., (i) those who are involved in worldliness, (ii) those who follow the Vedic Karma Kanda, and Pushti, respectively. The world is real and not illusory but our attachment to the world is unreal and is due to Avidya which consists of egoism and possessiveness (Ahanta and Mamata).

Vallabhacharya says that those who perform sacrifices go by the path of the gods (Devayana), if they do Karma without attachment (Nishkama). Those who do such acts with desires go to Swarga and return to Samsara after their merit is exhausted. Those who follow the Jnana Marga attain the Akshara Brahman. But those who have

Inana and Bhakti attain oneness with Purna Purushottama Brahman Higher than even that attainment is that of a soul given a divine embodiment in this world out of God's grace God confers on him full bliss as an act of special divine grace called Pushti in Vallabha's system A supreme example of such Pushti is the case of the Gopte of Vrindavana who enjoyed Svarupananda which is higher than Brahmananda

#### PUSHTI MARGA AND MARYADA-MARGA

The Lord is Bass Of all Basses, Sringare or Love is the highest It shines more brightly in separation (Vipralambha) than in union (Sambhoga) Vallabha distinguishes Pushti Marga from Marvada Marga In the latter, a person practises Sravana etc to attain the love of the Lord In the former he practises Sravana out of love of God and not to attain love of God The Maryada Marga is open only to the male members of the three twice born groups whereas the Pushti Marga is open to all groups and castes and to both sexes God is the Eternal Bridegroom and all the souls are His eternal brides Every person must establish contact between himself and God by the sacrament or Samskara called Brhamansamhandha which is open to all persons irrespective of caste community colour or creed If there is a conflict between Bhagawata Dharma and Varnashrama Dharma the former must be preferred Though sometimes in practice the Pushti Marga followers have been found to be lax in morality, the system rigidly declares the union of Pushti and morality Even those who contact the Lord in anger will get Syuyuja but only those who contact Him in love can bear take to the Nitya Lila of the Lord and enjoy Bhajananda which is the highest form of infinite and eternal and supreme bliss The form of the Lord that is gene-

rally worshipped in the system is that of Sri Goverdhananathji, compendiously called as Sri Nathji whose shrine is at Nathdwara in Mewar The 12 Skandhas of the Bhagawata are identified with the 12 parts of Sri Nathji's form, the tenth Skandha being His heart

#### VIII LATER VAISHNAVISM IN NORTH INDIA

The course of the development of Veishnavism in North India and in Bengal bore the impress of the Veishnavism as developed in the Bhagawata and also as developed by Sri Ramanuja and Sri Madhava

Sri Ramananda (1370-1440 A.D.) was profoundly influenced by Sri Ramanuja Kabir Ravidas and others were his disciples Dadu (1544-1603) was a cotton carder of Benaras According to him it's creation is the mirror in which God beholds and enjoys His beauty Tulsi Das (1532-1623 A.D.) was an ardent devotee of Sri Rama and his 'Rama Charita Manasa' in Hindi is one of the world's supreme classics The great peculiarity of North Indian Vaishnavism is its freedom from caste restriction and its teaching that devotion and Salvation were open to all The songs of Surdas and Mira Bai through with mystic divine emotion and are among the marvels of the world

#### IX THE LATER VAISHNAVISM IN BENGAL

The Immortal song 'Gita Govinda' of Jayadeva belongs to the 12th century A.C. in Bengal and is a blend of glorious music and mystic passion and poetic artistry The mutual passion of Radha and Krishna symbolizes the mutual yearning of Soutadri Overeoni We must get rid of Trishna (desire) and install Krishna in our hearts The same Krishna passes on shyness to the teaching of Chaitanya (1486-1527) He was

born at Nadia named Nima. He was also called Gowranga because of the beauty of his complexion which was like molten gold. He was a great logician, but suddenly he became full of Krishna Prema on seeing the sacred Vishnupada (God's lotus feet). Chaitanya spread Krishna Prem all over the land by his marvellous Sankirtan (congregational singing).

There is a tradition in the North that there are four sects of Vaishnavas—(1) Sri sect which was headed by Sri Ramanuja (2) Madhwa sect headed by Madhwacharya (3) Sanaka sect headed by Nimbarka and (4) Rudra sect headed by Vallabha Chaitanya's Vaishnavism is akin to Sri Madhwa's faith. Sri Krishna is, according to him, the absolute, transcendental Brahman. He has infinite attributes or Shaktis of which the chief are Sandini Samvit and Atadini (corresponding to Sat, Cbit and Ananda). Radha Dasi is His consort and is incarnate, Krishna Prema or Madhura Bhava or Madhurya Rasa. Chaitanya's philosophy is called Achintyabheda-bheda, i.e., the relation between the Jiva and Brahman or Sri Krishna is Bheda-bheda, i.e., unity in duality, which cannot be logically explained though it can be mystically experienced and enjoyed. Baladeva's Bhashya on the Brahma Sutras called Garuda Bhashya, expounds this Achintyabheda-bheda system of philosophy admirably.

#### X RECENT TENDENCIES IN VAISHNAVISM

There have been later Vaishnava movements also. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa while experiencing all the diverse faiths regarded himself as Radha and experienced the ecstasy of Krishna-Prem. The recent Sat Baba and Harnath cults are connected with Vaishnavism. The Harikatha and Bhajan and Sankirtan movements which are alive and in full swing all over India

have kept Vaishnavism alive in the land. Quite recently the famous Baba Bharati spread Krishna worship in the East and the West alike. I may also state how Mahatma Gandhi was a passionate lover of Ram Nam. I may further point out how His Holiness Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh is passionately devoted to Bhajan and Sankirtan and to the worship of Vishnu and Rama and Krishna though not to the exclusion of Siva or Shakti. He says 'The name of Sri Rama is sweeter than the sweetest of objects—it bathes the aspirant in the ocean of Divine bliss.' In his introduction to his drama 'Radha's Prem' he says 'The supreme emanation, Mahabhava is the quintessence of Prem. The essence of Hladini Shakti is selfless Krishna prem. This selfless love is called Ananda Cbit-maya Rasa. Radha is the embodiment of Mahabhava.'

#### XI THE FUTURE OF VAISHNAVISM

We can thus see from the history of the evolution of Hinduism how Vaishnavism has been one of the life centres of this ancient religion so much so that we may well say that Vaishnavism is Hinduism and Hinduism is Vaishnavism, provided Vaishnavism forgets that it is a sectarian cult and remembers that it is a world faith. In the Bhagawata Vishnu says that He and Siva and Brahma are the world creators. The 'Vishnu Sahasranama' shows how Siva is an ardent Vishnu-worshipper and the Rameswaram temple shows how Rama is a Siva worshipper.

Sri Sankara was a great devotee of Vishnu and wrote a commentary on Vishnu Sahasranama. The essence of the Veda is that the Absolute and the Personal God are one, that the Trimurtis are one, and that God and His Shakti are one. God's forms are equal to one another and God's names are equal to one another. Each name stresses one divine quality or attri-

bute and implies the other qualities and attributes as well. And yet there are Ramahigots who will deny that Krishna is Purna Brahma, while there are Krishnabigots who will deny that Rama is Purna-Brahma. There need not be any further wrangles as to whether Vishnu or Siva is superior, or whether Rama or Krishna is superior. A man's Vasanas may lead him to the worship of this or that name and form of the one, eternal Godhead but his preference cannot and does not mean any grading among such names or forms. Every exaltation of one divine name or form is only to intensify faith and not to cry down other names and forms of God (Nahi-noda-nyaya). Sri Krishna promises salvation to all and says that none is outside.

The future Vaishnavism will purge itself of all Calvinistic limitations and sectarian denunciations. It will glorify God Vishnu and His mercy and beseve-

rance and grace. Each soul will seek devotions to this or that name and form of God, and to this or that Mantra or Sadhana, and will seek to attain this or that form of beatitude. While glorifying this or that name and form of God and expounding this or that view of Reality and teaching or that Sadhana and this or that goal, the fierce and thunderous polemics and denunciations of the mediaeval ages in India will not be tolerated hereafter. Saivism and Vaishnavism will hereafter be friends and not foes and will be integral portions of Hinduism.

### XII. CONCLUSION

Thus Vaishnavism has developed in India as a world-faith. Its exalted ethics, mythology, creed, ritual and Sadhana (spiritual techniques) will enable it to have an appeal to the human heart for ever. It will be and is destined to be the guide, philosopher and friend of the human spirit for ever and ever.

## Pancharatra Agama

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Pancharatra is a hoary system of theology. Its beginnings are lost in time and it claims a divine origin as having been taught by Sriiman-Narayana, the Supreme Godhead to five disciples namely Ananta (Adisesha), Garuda, Vishvakaata, Rudra (Siva) and Brahma. There is a tradition which says that as the occult secret instructions were given in five consecutive nights (Ratris) the name Pancharatra came to be applied to this doctrine of Divine Worship. At the beginning it was one Sashtra comprising the Jnana (knowledge of God-head), Yoga, (meditation for union), Kiya (construction of temples and images)

and Karya (doing or performing religious and spiritual activities in connection with the service of God). But this huge Sashtra of nearly one and a half crores of Si ~~es~~ became split up into Samhitas of lesser length. We have nearly 210 Pancharatra Samhitas but only a few of them are said to be authoritative such as the Narasimha, Mahasanatkumara Jayakhya, Parameśvara, Ivara, Kapinjala, Parasara, Padme, Vishnuitlaka, Bharadvaja, Sriptasna, Sativata, Brhadhrxma and Abhirudhanya.

### AN ANCIENT DOCTRINE

The Pancharatra Agama is at least as old as the Mahabharata. It is mentioned in the

Santiparva Sri Krishna is said to have been a Sattvata (Pancharatra). It is also known as the Cult of Vasudeva. Further colour is lent to this by the naming of the sons and grandson of Sri Krishna as Pradyumna and Aniruddha whereas his own brother was known as Sankarshana. Sankarshana Pradyumna and Aniruddha are said to be the Vyuhas (cosmic powers of withdrawal, sustentation and creation) whilst Sri Krishna as Vasudeva was the redeemer and saviour of the world in travail. Dr R G Bhandarkar has also attempted to show that at least by the time of the Harivamsa the identification of the Ahhira Gopala Krishna with the Maha hharata Sri Krishna Vasudeva was complete. The Sattvata doctrine is clearly implicit in the teaching of the Bhagavad Gita. It was an attempt at a sublimated synthesis of works knowledge and sacrifice taught in the Upanishads and the Vedas. It was a very ancient doctrine as Sri Krishna himself states (Bhagavad Gita IV) It is the distilled teaching of Sri Krishna who announced Himself as the descent of God in all His supreme plenitude.

#### ORIGIN

The Pancharatra Agama claims that it teaches the knowledge that can flow into works of worship and lead to the ultimate realization. The same Ratra is traced to the view that the teaching would grant that knowledge which liberates man or the bound soul from its cycle of ignorances. The ignorances are attributed to the individual from beginningless time and go with Karma which again is beginningless. Another view is that the teaching was given to five great seers by God namely Brahma Rodra Indra Ananta and Garuda on five successive nights. Each became a Samhita and each of course was directed to a particular kind of exposition though all Samhitias contained the essential teaching.

It has been also suggested that there is some connection with the Pancharatra atra of the Brahmanas—five night sacrifices. Sacrifice has here sublimated in the Pancharatra Agama in order to be of the order of worship of the forms of God. The peculiar or differentiating doctrine (Pradhana pratitanastra) of Pancharatra is its emphasis on the worship of the one supreme Being who has taken forms suitable for worship. But such suitability for worship included the conception that the forms worshipped are indeed capable of being directly the supreme Object of worship and adoration. The Pancharatra view in excessa sublimates and synthesizes the teaching of the Upaishads and Brhmaas and Maetras belonging to the Vedic knowledge by integrating philosophy of discrimination occult efficacy of Mantra the designs peculiar to the several powers or mechanisms of invocation and presence (Yantra) the establishment of the places of residence (Mandira) or temples to a particular manner appropriate to the Divine Force the manner of installation the prescribing of duties to the individuals who would profit by the presence of the Divine, and the performance of the festivals appropriate to the supreme Form installed in the temple.

#### A THEISTIC PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of discrimination that it teaches is similar to that the Samkhya philosophy but with a difference. In fact it is stated to be theistic edition of Samkhya which has similarity with the Visistadvaita philosophy of Sri Ramanuja. The one supreme Godhead is always inseparably connected with the divine principle of Lakshmi who is His Sakti. This Sakti is the principle of creativity and is also known in one of Her aspects as Sudarshana. Though undifferentiated from Hm in the period prior to evolution when

everything is 'a sky without a single cloud,' at the end of the period of the night (Purnishi Ratri) the Sakti of Vishnu opens Her eyes and it almost looks like a lightning in the sky, and She begins to act.

Lakshmi alone acts, Vishnu is 'transcendent'. Sudarshana is the Kriya Sakti of Lakshmi, and Bhuti Sakti is the material world; thus Vishnu is said to be the 'cause efficientis' of the created world, Kanya Sakti is the 'causa instrumentalis,' whereas the Bhuti Sakti is the material cause ('causa materialis'). The transcendental aspect of Vishnu is the background. The world or the universe is created in two stages called Advarika and Sadvarika one which is a transcendental process when the Divine Himself splits into four forms which are cosmic lords of the several cosmic processes and elements.

The souls are said to be indistinguishably massed under the first Vyusa (split of the Godhead who had opened His eyes so to speak) named as Sankarshana. Then the second split of Vasudeva originating from Sankarshana is the Lord of the Mind when the duality between souls and Nature emerges and He is named Pradyumna. The third split originating from the last is called Aniruddha and is the Adidevata of the Guna. There are of course possibly variations. But the general fact remains that these three or four Vyuhas or splits are of cosmic or transcosmic nature which render possible the lower creation. The principle of unity along with the timeless hetas is emphasized. In modern language of the seer, Sri Aurobindo, we can say that these are supernal states of the eternal and the immortal.

The Supreme Godhead known as Vasudeva, transcendent to all process, manifests Himself in the creative manifestation beyond human time as the creator and sustainer and withdrawer

principles, whilst remaining within the scheme of creation as Himself. Thus four forms has the one Vasudeva, namely, of Vasudeva of the Kshetrahdhi, of Sankarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha.

There seems to be also the realization of the great truth that the process of creation is a Parinama (evolution), gradual manifestation of the inner nature of the things that exist, namely, the souls and the material world. The Lord thus becomes the indwelling, impelling principle by 'entering into the creation' as the Antaryami. This entering of the supreme Para-Vasudeva takes place in the heart of all creatures.

#### AVATARAS

The further truth that the Supreme Lord enters into creation not only as the indwelling, inner, impelling Principle of evolution in each creature (and Tattva) to include the 'historical' descents of God as personalities endowed with supernal powers and richness and sovereignty who come to order the process of life according to the immutable laws of Spirit. The Bhagavad Gita gives a full exposition of this meaning of the Avatars (divine descent) when it says that the Lord incarnates (descends into the historical situation) whenever righteousness decreases and evil increases, to save the righteous and eliminate and destroy the wicked.

There are of course manifold ways of saving the souls, physically, vitally, mentally and spiritually, and many indeed are the incarnations of the Divine, adapted to all sorts of ways to the fulfilment of the Divine Will. These Avatars are reckoned by the Pancharatra to be 36 important ones, of which ten are reckoned by the public as the most important. These are known as Vibhavas. The Permanent Avatars come into being for a brief while, taking possession of a mighty soul and working out the

mission and passing out of it as soon as the mission is over. The permanent Avatars are those which continue for the whole period of creation (Srishti), and Amsa-avatars (partial descents) are those which are sent for the purpose or mission that has to be done, which they execute with divine efficiency. Indeed much speculation has been expended over the particular source or origin of the Avatars themselves, whether a particular Avatar belongs to the place of Sankarshana, Pradyumna, Aniruddha or Vasudeva. Thus among the eternal Avatars, Kesava, Narasimha and Madhava are referred to Vasudeva the three lords being the lords of the moths.

Govinda, Vishnu and Madhusudana belong to Sankarshana, Trivikrama, Vamana and Srikrishna belong to Pradyumna, and Hrishikesa, Padmanabha and Damodara belong to Aniruddha. (Obviously Trivikrama and Vamsna as lords of the respective moths are different from the 'historical' descents). The 'historical' descents also are referred to the different Vyuhas. This Matsya, Kurma and Varaha are from Vasudeva, Nrusimha, Vamsa and Parasurama are from Sankarshana. Desaratha Rama and Balarama are from Pradyumna whereas Krishna and Kalki are from Aniruddha.

Pancharatra does not recognize Buddha as an Avatar of the right order but of the left order, that is, the purpose of that Avatar is not to restore the right and redress the wrong so much as the attracting of the wrong by the process of presenting deities which have the glamour of godlessness and goodness superficially considered. There are other versions of this process. One thing emerges that God is at once the incarnate Lord of the form of Time (as Varsha or Samvatsara) as Mass and as day and night. This is beautifully echoed in the Prashnopanishad (first Prasha) which however, is not referred to by any Agama

### THEORY OF TIME

Time in its eternal form as well as in its temporal, serial form has been thus given a full place. Everything in this world works out according to Time and Niyati (fixed order and not so much the predestined order) and Guna (the quality of events and things). There are interesting discussions as whether they are one unity which have separated gradually in evolution (Parinama) as three different principles. It is clear that Time as singular succession almost is Niyati and the Gunas of time depends on the spans of time. But all thinkers of the Pancharatra had the conception of the integral time which is neither subjective nor merely objective but as the dimension of every event. All categories not mainly matter but soul also are differentiated according to their time factor, law factor and quality factor. Thus we have Deva Manava and Pasu, etc., with different measures of time, they have their respective Dharma and Adharma or Niyati and they are distinguished by their qualities of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. The formation of the original timeless process becomes the condition for the manifestation. The subtle becomes the condition of the gross manifestation.

### PROCESS OF REALIZATION

The souls also are gradually made to descend into the most gross elements and assume such bodies as their Karma demands. They are found in all conditions and have different equipments which help their movement. Having descended into the most gross not by their own will however, they have been given the opportunity for returning to the timeless state. They have to become self conscious of the supreme status from which they have descended. They should realize that they are in every activity sustained by the

power of Brahman. The whole process of creation must be realized as the play of the one supreme Being through His Power (Lakshmi) which is manifested in two forms as Sudarsana and Bhuti sakti (Maya, Vidya Sasvadvidya Mula prakriti). They are to realize their unity with God in every sense. It is because of this supreme unity of the soul with Brahman (Vishnu) that the soul experiences liberation.

The Philosophy of the Pancbaratra is capable of being described as Visistadvaita, in so far as the Supreme Brahman as Vishnu is eternally inseparably and even indistinguishably one with His Power, Lakshmi and the souls are eternal Amras of the Supreme Brahman's Power, so to speak. There is only God with His Power and no other. The processes of this Power of God are real processes involving two processes of Parinama and involvement or descent of the souls into every category of Bhuti sakti or Nature, and a return or ascent in and through these categories so to speak by realizing that one is the Amra of God (or His Power) and by dedicating oneself to that Godhead through surrender and devotion.

#### "ARCHA" FORM OF GOD

The Archa Avatara is, of course, the most important part of this Agama as it renders worship possible in a concrete way that is open to all souls even at the lowest level. Redemption being the aim, and return being the immediate incentive, the souls turn to God. A philosophical certainty about the existence of the Creator-God is good for those who think or could think that the transcendent Godhead is beyond all knowledge unless He could present Himself in vision, the historical Avatara could not be approached by all and served and loved, because He descends only at certain periods of time and withdraws. The Antaravamana is to be known and worshipped

and loved and entered into only by the Yogins in their deepest moments of meditation. Not so however, the Archa form of God which one could install at any time and place and at all places and worship and see and adore. It is the most accessible form, and all persons, in so far as they are embodied, feel the necessity for visualized God. It is necessary to realize that the same power and force of the Divine and visibly pervades and acts in this delegate.

Thus the Archa is not a representation or merely an object for mediatorial purposes (Pratika), but a presence, to full of the Divine Himself and His Power.

#### TEMPLE WORSHIP

The Archa has to be installed in a particular manner. Indeed it has to be made according to the Sastras on this subject. The Paocharatra Agama devotes a considerable amount of its enquiry into the proper construction of the temple and the proportion of the temple to the size of the image to be installed. Nowadays with modern notions we are likely to forget that the temple should be treated as reverently as we treat a power-house and the occult force of the installed idol can be restrained without being 'earthing' by the maintenance of the occult health of the temple. The human individual must worship the Divine's five forms during the five periods of the Day. The worshipper should conform to the Abhigamana, Upadana, Ijya, Svadhyaya and Yoga kalas, and thus he in touch with the five-fold nature of Brahman always to order to be able to attain the果तों उन्नति with God which is liberation. These worshippers are known as Panchakala parayanam. The temple-worship also conforms to this Panchakala nyaya and should be sedulously performed by the priests according to the prescribed methods. Any

violation of these performances would lead to the withdrawal of the presence. The conditions of the presence are really important. Just as the Yogi has to practise Yama and Niyama, so, too, the Archaka and the devotees should closely observe the principles of Svadharma, Saucha, and Isvara-prandhana. The worship of the temple includes the strict cleanliness in all matters and correct chanting of the Mantras and other observances. Man lives in the holy presence of God in order to benefit from such a daily contact. Then alone there grows the awareness of the other wonderful forms of the Supreme Godhead, from and issuing out of this Archa.

#### STAGES OF LIBERATION

The word 'Archa' itself signifies the light which leads to the light-worlds, to the Archiradi Marga of God realization. Sayujya, Selokya, Sarupya and Samipya are the four stages of this process. To live near God, to experience the worlds of the Light of God to get united with God in all His supreme glory, and finally to attain the same quality or form of God, which is the attainment of universality in all modes of consciousness and benevolence in all activities of that consciousness except with regard to the creative world activities (Lokavyapars) are indeed the four stages of the liberation. All these are rendered possible by the worship of the iconic representation (Archa), which is to be worshipped as if it is indeed also the Para (transcendent) Vyusa (cosmic powers), Vishvava (Avatara) and the Antaryami Hada, seated in the heart of all creatures. This is integral meditation. All are indeed perfect, full and one only, even as the Veds puts it

'Purnamadah purnamidam purnat purnam udachyate, purnaaya purnamadaya, purnam evavasishyate'

That (Para) is full (integral), this (Archa) is integral (full), arising from that integral (this) (Vyusa) is integral, that which is arising indeed full (integral), that which remains is integral (full). In none is there diminution or loss of perfectness or integral oneness. This is the mystic realization of Pancharatra philosophers and Alvars.

#### PRAPATTI YOGA

The glory of Pancharatra lies in the assertion that God can be perceived here and now on this terrestrial scheme of things, provided one surrenders oneself to this experience of God through the God in the temple, dedicated and consecrated to His Supreme Presence. Prapatti is the path of Yoga which includes gradually all other Yogas in the light of surrender. One should will to know God, renounce all that leads him away from Him, choose Him alone as the path and way and end. An increase in the faith in Him as the one supreme Person everywhere and in every activity, both objective and subjective, and an utter surrender to Him will be perfect devotion and understanding constitute the Yoga of Prapatti which should be understood to include the Jnana, karma and Bhakti Yogas in an integral way.

Thus, briefly considered, Pancharatra is one of the most interesting and living theisms in the world and in a pregnant sense the most complete and satisfying theism.

('ARADHANA')

# Sankhya Philosophy

Sri Manohar C. Pandya, M.A., LL.B.

## Sage Kapila, the Founder

The Sankhya System of Philosophy has been ascribed to the great sage Kapila who is described in the Bhagavad Gita as a partial manifestation (Vibhuti) of the Lord. Kapila was a historic personage of a period not later than 700 B.C., as appears from references in the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, the Puranas and contemporaneous literature. In the Buddha-Charite of Asvaghosha there is reference to a meeting between Buddha and his former teacher Alara who held Sankhya-views based on theism as modified by the doctrine of qualified monism (Visishtadvaita) of Ramanuja which was developed later on as a full-bladed system of philosophy from the seeds cast by Kapila. Kapila was not a mythological person as understood by some European scholars who have identified him with Hiranyagarbha mentioned in the Svetasvatara Upanishad. There is a reference by Sri Sankaracharya in the Brahma Sutras and the Gita to the original Sankhya-Sutra of Kapila, but this is not available at present, having been destroyed in course of time as mentioned in the Bhagavata Purana.

## Is Sankhya Atheistic?

The earliest reference to the doctrines of Sankhya-Philosophy is in the Mahabharata from which one can say that the original Sankhya was theistic, and not atheistic as it came to be in the later Sankhya Kevalika of Ishvara Krishna of the 4th Century A.D. and the Sankhya Pravachana Sutra of the 14th Century A.D. commented on by the great scholar, Vipasna Bhatta. The Sankhya was a very influential school of philosophy as appears from numerous references to its doctrines in the Brahma Sutras, Bhagavad Gita, Ma-

smriti and the Puranas, such as those of the cosmic evolution of 23 principles from Prakrti (Nature) or Pradhana—the first principle—by union with Purusha, making in all 25 principles, the doctrine of triple constituents (Trigunas) of Prakrti, viz., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, the doctrine that liberation can be secured only by spiritual knowledge, and so forth. The doctrine of Trigunas, the three constituents of Prakrti, is accepted in the Bhagavad Gita where, however, Prakrti is not treated as an independent principle, as in the Sankhya, but as the lower power of the Absolute Purushottama. Kapila taught Sankhya to his disciple Asuri, who taught it to Panchasikha, and the latter taught it to Ishvara Krishna, the author of the Sankhya Kevalika, which is the locus classicus of the Sankhya which is atheistic. Some believe that Sankhya is an adaptation from Sankhya, meaning number or the series of 23 evolutes from Prakrti, which, with the Purusha, makes a total of 25 principles. It has also been explained by others as a philosophy which gives perfect knowledge (Samyognana) and is therefore called Sankhya.

## Distinctive Contribution of Sankhya Metaphysics to Spiritual Thought

The Sankhya aims at a knowledge of the Supreme Reality for the principal purpose of putting an end to all pain and suffering of three kinds, viz., Adhibhautika (material pain), Adhidaivika (superhuman pain) and Adhyatmika (internal pain). Sankhya believes in the reality of the world as evolved from Prakrti. Sankhya gives us a metaphysical knowledge of the Self (Atman), which is higher than that given by the other systems, excepting, of course, the Vedanta which gives us the essence of

spiritual monism and the ambrosia of infinite joy by synthetic and intuitive experience of Self-realization. Sankhya, however, is a metaphysics of dualistic realism, and is superior to the Nyaya and Vaishesika systems, which are cruder, and teach pluralism and the reality of many independent principles, viz., atoms, mind souls, God, etc. The Sankhya recognizes only two ultimate realities, namely, spirit and matter (Purusha and Prakrti).

#### Origin of the Sankhya

Some of the doctrines of the Sankhya are traced so far back as the Upanishads and the Rig Veda, but they are there in a fragmentary form. We find it as a regular and full fledged system for the first time in the Sankhya Karika of Ishvara Krishna, which was atheistical and was formulated evidently with the object of counteracting the anti-Vedic doctrines of void (Sanyavada) and subjective idealism (Vijnanavada) of the Buddhists. The Sankhya doctrines were based on higher ethics and spirituality, coupled with a spirit of renunciation and an altruistic principle of social welfare. The Sankhya was totally opposed to the materialistic philosophy of the Charvakas—to eat, drink and be merry. An instructive religious sermon of Sankhya doctrines, akin to that of the Vedanta theology, given by Kapila to his mother Devahuti is to be found in the Bhagavata Purana, a perusal of which will suffice to dispel the wrong impression of the Western scholar Jacobi that the Sankhya was based on materialism.

#### The Sankhya Metaphysics

##### (I) Theory of Causation

The Sankhya theory of causation is known as Satkaryavada which asserts, as in the Vedanta that the effect is not different from the cause, but exists in the cause potentially prior to its production,

as opposed to the Nyaya theory of A-at-karyavada, according to which the effect (Karya) is Asat or non-existent before its production and is different from the cause.

##### (2) Parinamavada Theories of Creation of the Sankhya and the Vedanta

The Sankhya theory of creation is called Parinamavada, according to which the primordial cause Prakrti modifies itself in the form of effects by certain changes within itself, just as milk is converted into curd. The Vaishnava teachers like Sri Ramanuja, also, believe in the Parinamavada theory of creation, but with this it is distinguished from the Sankhya theory and is known as Avikrita-Parinamavada, which states that the cosmic evolution which proceeds from God is real but that God's nature is not thereby modified in any way. The theory of creation propounded by Sankara in his philosophy of Kevaladvaita or absolute monism is known as Vivartavada or the theory of appearance, which states that, though the world originates from the unchangeable Supreme Lord, yet, it appears in the form of names and forms as if they are self-subsisting real and independent, just as a rope in the dark appears as a serpent. They have, however a relative reality only and not absolute reality. The illusion disappears on true knowledge. The appearances of the universe have only a relative reality and an instrumental value for realizing the supreme goal of life. The teachers of the Sankhya as well as of the Vedanta unlike those of Semitic and Christian faiths, have by subtle reasoning established the doctrine that, something cannot come out of nothing in order to refute the Buddhist doctrine of the void or Sunya as the source of the world of names and forms by a process of mechanistic causation. The Vedanta of

the Vaishnava-Acharyas who accept the Sankhya theory of Paricamavada with a slight modification is vitiated by the Sankhya dualism, as they believe the world of names and forms to be as real as God, even though apparently changing by its atomistic nature. The Vedanta of Sankara, on the other hand, which is followed by about 75% of the Hindus and the intelligentsia, holds the doctrine of absolute idealism or non-dual monism (Kevaladvaita) as the supreme philosophy which states that Brahman as Absolute Self above is real and that whatever appears different from it is the guise of names and forms has only a relative reality though grounded in the Absolute Self.

### (3) Sankhya Dualism

The fundamental doctrine of the Sankhya which distinguishes it from the Vedanta is the dualism of Purusha (spirit) and Prakriti or Pradhana (material nature) as two entirely distinct principles, which appear closely connected together from eternity as knowing subject and objective existence opposed to it. But no attempt is made to derive them from a higher principle of unity like the Brahman (the Absolute) of the Vedanta, or to trace them back to it. The sufferings of existence are dependent on this apparent connection, the removal of which is the proper aim of man, as laid down in the Sankhya. This object is attained as soon as Purusha recognizes its entire distinctness (Viveka) from Prakriti. Once this saving knowledge has been gained by one, none of the sufferings of the universe are any longer one's sorrows. Deliverance is found in the dissolution of the bond between Purusha and Prakriti. Deliverance does not concern the Purusha but the Prakriti though Purusha is the experiencer of boons and freedom. The process of deliverance is to be conceived as individual. The Prakriti, in order

to bring about to the Purusha the recognition of its distinctness and therewith its own release, unfolds itself repeatedly before the eye of the Purusha. It consists in the evolution of the Mahat (the great, i.e., the intellect, consciousness) from Prakriti, as the first move, and thereafter in the evolution of Ahankara, (individualization) from the Mahat, and from the Ahankara, on the one hand Manas (mind) and the 10 Indriyas (organs of sense and action) and on the other hand, the 5 Tanmatras (subtle elements), and from these, locally, the 5 Bhutas (elements). The first 18 products of Prakriti,—Mahat, Ahankara, Manas, 10 Indriyas and 5 Tanmatras—form the subtle body (Linga) which surrounds the soul and accompanies it in all its wanderings, until there is spiritual knowledge of discrimination of Purusha and Prakriti, which leads to emancipation or freedom from trammel gratification. The more closely this system is investigated the more unsatisfactory and incomprehensible from a philosophical point of view will it be found to be. The whole thing becomes intelligible for the first time when we regard it as the final result and the blending together of very heterogeneous ideas which have been handed down from earlier times.

### (4) Origin of the Sankhya Dualism

To hold that there can be only one God and no more, is to involve God in the nature of a philosophical principle of a unity from which the variety of the phenomenal universe is derived. It follows that monism is the natural standpoint of philosophy, and wherever dualism has appeared in its history, it has always been the consequence of averted stress and difficulty and as it were, a symptom of the waner of the philosophical spirit. The dualism of the Sankhya doctrine cannot be regarded as a primitive view of nature; for how should two heterogeneous principles like

Purusha and Prakrti distinct from first to last, accidentally meet in infinite space and infinite time and, further, be so marvelously suited to one another that they could unite to evolve the universe? The result attained is to be conceived rather as the consequence of a natural disintegration of the doctrine of the Upanishads.

(5) *The Sankhya Doctrine of Emancipation Inconsistent with that of the Upanishads*

Both the Vedanta and the Sankhya proclaim as their fundamental view the proposition 'Deliverance is gained by Knowledge'. This proposition is in harmony throughout with the assumptions of the Vedanta, but not with those of the Sankhya. According to the doctrine of the Absolute Idealism of the Upanishads, the Brahman Atman alone is real, while the manifold universe is an illusion (*Maya*). This illusion is penetrated by the awakening of knowledge and it is in this that deliverance consists. Here all is perfectly consistent. It is, however otherwise in the Sankhya where matter is as real as the soul, and, therefore cannot be recognized by the latter as an illusion. The illusion which has to be penetrated is concerned in this case solely with the union between Prakrti

and Purusha. This, however cannot be sustained throughout from a philosophical point of view. For, a union either really subsists or it does not. If it is real no advance of knowledge can lead to dissolution of the union but at the most to a clear consciousness of it, whereby however it is still far from being dissolved. The keen sword of knowledge can cleave the mist of an illusion, but cannot sever an actually existing union. If, on the other hand the union between the two realities Purusha and Prakrti is not real, it has no existence at all. It is, then not true that Purusha enlightens Prakrti or that Prakrti is reflected in Purusha, and this illumination or reflection may not be employed to explain the phenomenon of suffering for it does not itself exist, for, on this account, suffering itself does not exist. The main defect of the Sankhya view of liberation, however consists in the fact that the Purusha cannot be said to be absolutely free as long as there is another contending principle the Prakrti; though it is said that the Purusha has no contact with it when it gains knowledge of itself. But credit must be given to the Sankhya that it paves the ground for the more advanced speculations of Vedants.

### What is Religion?

Sri Swami Sarananda

That which binds the soul with God is religion. Religion is the spiritualization of the human life. Religion is the practical aspect of philosophy and philosophy is the rational aspect of Religion. Religious culture is really the culture of freedom from all imperfections, narrowness and bigotry. It is the culture of the spirit to find the fullest expression in one's daily life. Religion is a universal code of life for the practice of all positive virtues and eradication of all that is negative and false.

# The Philosophy of the Bhagavad Gita

Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan

[Vice-President of India]

The Bhagavad Gita is a book which has given solace to millions of our countrymen across the ages; not only to our countrymen but to many people outside also. It is a book which has comforted souls in distress, which has healed the wounds of many people who are seriously afflicted, a book to which testimony has been paid by men of our country and abroad. The great Acharya Sankara, in his commentary tells us that it is an epitome of all the Shastras. 'Samasta Vedartha Sarva Sangraha Bhutem'—It is the quintessence of all the Vedas and it leads to the realization of the different ends of life—'Sakala Prurusharta Siddhi'—it enables you to realize the different ends of life—Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha.

## A Human Gospel

When Warren Hastings was writing an introduction to the first English translation of the Bhagavad Gita, he said,

"Writings like this will arrive when the British Empire has lost its dominion over India; when the sources of its wealth and prosperity are lost to remembrance, this book and writings like this will survive." and he meant to say that it is a book which is neither ancient nor modern, neither eastern nor western, but a human gospel voicing forth the fundamental truths which have worked so to say into the very structure of humanity. It belongs to the very life-blood of the human soul. It does not deal with any sectarian gospel. It does not give you any dogma. It does not insist on the celebration of certain ceremonies or subscription to certain formulas, but it gives you certain root-conceptions, certain fundamental ideas which are bound to

prevail so long as human nature continues to be what it is.

Aldous Huxley wrote in his introduction to a book published by the Ramakrishna Mission:

"Here is a most comprehensive statement of perennial philosophy ..... If you want a book which will assist humanity in striving for it, its eternal, here is the book, the most systematic statement of spiritual evolution, of enduring value to mankind."

That is how he put it. You find therefore the book has been appreciated by people of India as well as outside.

## Three Fundamental Features

In a single discourse it will not be possible for me to dwell at great length on the different aspects of that great gospel. All that I wish to do is to invite your attention to certain fundamental features thereof. You will find in the closing chapter it is said, "Brahma Vidya, Yoga Shashtra, Krishna-Arjuna Samvada" These three words—(i) Brahma Vidya is the metaphysical statement of Reality. It gives you a logical account of what Reality is. (ii) Yoga Shashtra indicates to you the pathway to the attainment of that Reality. (iii) Krishna-Arjuna Samvada—it is the culmination when the human soul is in communion with the Divine, when the naked individual stands alone before the Alone Krishna, the Divine and Arjuna, the human soul have communion with each other. Metaphysics, ethics and religion. Brahma Vidya is a metaphysical theory of Reality. Yoga Shashtra is the ethical pathway to it. Krishna-Arjuna Samvada

is the Spiritual Realization or the attainment of the Supreme.

### Science of Reality

I propose to draw your attention to a few of these aspects Brahma Vidya, I said is a metaphysical statement Well, here in India we never ask the intellect to be suppressed We never say "Ohey and ask no question" The classic on the Brahma Vidya is the Brahma Sutras It opens with the Sutra "Athatho Brahma Jignasa"—now therefore an enquiry into Brahman Jignasa—an investigation an intellectual enquiry—a logical approach That is what it tells you. And how do you approach the problem of metaphysics?

The second Sutra tells you "Jigmadyaaya Yathah" Is there a Reality from which all these things issue? That second Sutra has reference to the Bhṛiguvalī of the Taittiriya-Upanishad, where the pupil approaches the teacher and asks him "Adhihi Bhagavo Brahmeti" "Teach me, O Master, what is Brahmac?" And the answer given is 'Tapaa Brahma Vijnanasesva' By independent reflection, by your mental austerity, try to understand what Brahman or the fundamental Reality is Brahman is that from which all things arise, by which they are maintained, into which they are 'Yain Va Imant Bhutani Jatani Yena Jatans Javanti Yat Prayaniyabhisam Visthanti Tat Brahma' Try to find out what that ultimate principle is, which is the explanation of all this cosmic evolution

### Cosmic Evolution

The pupil proceeds step by step He says—"May matter be Brahman—Annam Brahman Second may life be Brahman—Pranam Brahman Third, may animal mind be Brahman—Mann Brahman Fourth, may human intellect be Brahman—Vijnanam Brahma" He looks at the world He finds out that there is an order, there is an

amazing progression, that things have evolved from unconscious matter or Aṇa to life in the plant-world from the plant-world to Manas or the animal-world, from the animal-world to the human mind or the world of Vijnana There has been an upward growth in evolution It cannot be due to an unholly void Caprice cannot be the root of things

There is an order, there is a progress and we go step by step Such an orderly progressive ascent of the cosmic evolution requires a fundamental principle informing it animating it, leading it to rise from one stage to another Therefore the answer is given "Anandam Brahma" There is a fundamental Reality Divine Bliss which is operating in all these stages which is the cause of this multiple play of the manifested world There is one Supreme Reality without which you cannot account for this steady, onward, growth of matter to life, of life to consciousness, of consciousness to human intelligence, of human intelligence to Divine Bliss This very ascent is an indication of the orderliness of the world, of the progressiveness of the soul, and wherever you have order and progress there must be a mind at work It cannot be the human mind which is only the product or the outcome There must therefore be a Divine Principle

### Divine Principle

How shall we account for that Divine Principle? What is the name which we shall give to it? Will it be possible for us to give any kind of explanation for it? Here we are atoms in an empirical universe bound up in the world of space and time, striving to explore the nature of that unknown principle which stands behind Is it possible for our finite intellect to fathom that infinite wealth of Reality? The answer is 'We cannot' 'Yathu Vacho Nivartante Aprapya Manasa Saha'—That

from which words turn away along with the mind, baffled; we cannot explain it.

The only way in which we can express it, is to say, if this is the empirical world which is lost in space, time and cause, it is something beyond space, time and beyond cause 'Yai Tai Adreshyam, Agrahyam, Achakshu Shrotaram Tad Apani Padam'. We can only say that it is something invisible intangible; something which eludes words of mouth, categories of logic which stands above them all. They all expose their utter impotence or inadequacy when they try to account for that kind of Supreme Reality. "Silence has been the attitude which the greatest of our thinkers have adopted. The austerity of silence is the homage which little mind pays to the infinite riches of that Supreme Reality. Buddha kept silence. Sankara said "Shanoyam Atma." No description can be given of it. They were all bringing out the ineffable character of that Supreme Principle—calm, tranquil, ever present, animating the progress of the whole evolution.

#### Supreme Consciousness

Is it possible for us to be satisfied with that kind of negative account? No. While on one side it eludes description, we at the same time know, that it is the fundamental Reality covering this universe. It is the Lord of the Universe. It is the animating principle which is not only Para Brahman it is also Parameshwara—Ishwara as the Lord of the world. We need not put Him as merely the Supreme Governor of the Universe. If you are able to hold up your animal ways, if you are able to strip yourself naked, if you are able to have what you call Vastra Apaharana" if you throw away your body, mind, intellect, you come in contact with the conception of Universal Awareness without which there can be no body, no mind, no intellectual

functioning. All these are to be regarded as nothing more than the canalization of Supreme Consciousness which is lurking behind these external manifestations of the human soul.

In other words, the same Reality is Para Brahman who you look upon it as transcending the world. It is Parameshwara when you look upon it as the ruler of the world. It is Paramatma when you look upon it as the central source of your very being. It is the transcendental, cosmic and individual aspects the Bhagavata puts it. "Vadaoti Tat Tatvavidah Tatvam Yad Jnanam Advayam; Brahmeeti Paramatmati Bhagavan iti Sahadyata." Whether you call it Brahman, whether you call it Paramatman, whether you call it Bhagawan, it makes absolutely no kind of difference. It is merely a standpoint which you are adopting.

#### Eternal Lord of Righteousness

If the Supreme Lord is in he regarded as the Governor of universe, if He is to be put up as Sasyata Dharma Gopla, as the Eternal Lord of Righteousness, if this is the function which you attribute to Him, it follows that whenever there is a disturbance in the world, whenever you find a disturbance in the moral equilibrium of the world, that Supreme Reality which is manifesting itself in you and the infinite world, will also out of the plenitude of its wealth and compassion show itself in particular historical manifestations. When wickedness and unrighteousness grow, when the strong trample upon the weak—when such a condition arises, to use the words of the poet, "He comes, comes, ever comes." Sri Sankaracharya says in his introduction to the commentary on Gita—

"Sa Cha Bhagawan Jnanaishwarya Bata  
Virya Tejohshih  
Sada Sampanna Trignatmikam Vaish-  
navim Swam Msayam

Mulaprakrtim Vashikritya Ajn Avayayo  
 Bhutanam Eshwero  
 Nitya Shudda Buddha Mukta Swahavo  
 api saau Swamayaya  
 Dehavas iva jata lokaugrahem kurvan  
 iva cha lekshyate "

On such occasions, He manifests as a historical Individual for the uplift of humanity

#### Hidden Divine Power

Do not run away with the idea that the Supreme Revelation is a particular unique thing. It is a universal incarnation. It is an incarnation which can be brought about by every individual. A birth of Krishna is described. When Tamas predominates, when it is all night, when you do not see a single ray of light, the imprisoned splendour in each individual shines forth. He is there. The Paramatman is lurking in the depth of each man's being. But He is wrapped in all these 'Koshas' or sheaths. So long as the individual takes interest in and concentrates his attention on these objective manifestations that Pure Subject eludes any kind of handling.

It is when we are able to stand above all these objectifications that we are able to arrive at what may be called the pure subjectivity. A Jesus had to cry in sheer despair 'O God why hast Thou forsaken me'. It is a moment when the whole earth seemed to be cracking under His feet. Whoa he sees no hope when he gives up all his hope, then it is that he takes gleam of light and says 'Thy will be done'. Similarly Draupadi in a moment of despair simply cried out 'I have no husband, I have no brothers, I have nobody in this world even You O God Nava Madhu audana' even You are dead for me'. It is at that moment that she cried that everything else has appeared to her to be utter blank. It is at such a moment when the wrappings fall out, when the scales drop

off from our eyes, that we will see Divine Light, active Divine Power

#### Surrender of Individuality

Similarly when Arjuna was called upon to do his fighting, when he withdrew from it and said 'Why should I do what is socially commanded? Why should I conform to what society expects of me, these social demands, these individual demands, are nothing to me. I am frail, I am incompetent, I am in despair, won't you help me?' It is at such a moment that the Supreme came to the rescue of Arjuna. Whether it is Drupadi or Arjuna or Jesus Christ, it does not matter. So long as the individual is lost in the preoccupations of this world, he centres his hope on them and he is not able to detach himself altogether from these externalizations from these objectifications, there is no rise of the Lord in him.

#### Universal Destiny of Man

The birth of Krishna at the dead of night is merely the birth of Krishna or God in each human soul when the rest of the world becomes completely a night to us. When it is possible for us to lose faith in them all and when that external Light seems to be utter darkness, then that inward light will reveal itself. So, this incarnation is not to be regarded as a particular kind of toleration with the course of the world. It is to be regarded as the Universal Destiny of man. We are here for the purpose of realizing the Divinity which happens to be in us. The metaphysical discussion does not ask you to accept anything on authority. It merely puts before you the nature of the evolution, the necessity for a supreme principle of mind, the principle which governs the universe. If He is a Governor of the universe, He must take interest in the affairs of the world, and each of us can realize the Divinity within us by proceed-

ing through pathways appropriate to each Yoga Sastra

The second point is Yoga Sastra. It is the ethical pathway. It is the discipline which we have to adopt. It is easy for most of us to get up and say "I believe in God," and every moment do things that deny that belief. There is a difference between the decision of the intellect and the dynamic power of your life. It is essential for you to distinguish between Asti Brahman and Aham Brahman. It is easy for us to say there is God. It is difficult for us to say I have felt the Divine Reality in the pulse of my being. I have felt it in the blood of my heart. I believe in God even as I believe in this world. Unless we are in a position to say that God as Truth is realized by us, we cannot be supposed to be truly spiritual beings.

Metaphysical definition, logical acceptance is quite different from practical realization. We must be able to realize God in the depths of our consciousness. How can we do it? Here it is that the three methods of Jnana, Karma and Bhakti are placed before us. There are men who are intellectually inclined and for them the process is a process of concentration and abstraction from the outward.

#### Philosophical Attitude

When Pythagoras was asked to define what a philosopher's function was, he said "We all go to the feast of life some of us to make money, others to win name and fame still others to look on. These lookers-on are the philosophers."

Plato said "Philosophers are the spectators of all time and all space." Time and space are the outward objectives. The spectator is the inward principle of consciousness. Unless it is possible for you to discriminate between the Self or the Atman, and time and space which are the object or the Anatman, unless you are able

to withdraw the Atma from the Anatman, to discriminate between the Pure Self which is the mere looker-on and the objective self, more or less engaged in the pursuits of this world it is not possible for you to attain to that pure subjectivity which eludes any kind of objectification. There it is that the method of Dhyana Yoga is prescribed for us 'Nirasee Yata Chitta Atma'. You must be alone. But physical long-lines are not enough. We can shut ourselves in a room and harbour all kinds of miscellaneous thoughts in our minds. If you want to be your true self, you must be able to control the turbulent desires and the glamour of your passions. That is what it means when the Gita says 'Yata Chitta Atma'.

#### Possessionlessness

You must be detached. You must not have any kind of expectation of results or fruits. Aparigraha meaning free from possessiveness—the most insidious enemy of any kind of high life. When Jesus was approached by a man, who said to him "I have observed all the commandments, I have obeyed the laws, what else have I to do to attain the Kingdom of Heaven?", He said, "Go and sell all that thou hast and distribute it to the poor". He never returned to Jesus. Aparigraha indicates non-possessiveness. You must not have any kind of belongings which attach you to this world. That kind of detachment is absolutely essential.

Now Dhyana Yoga is the method by which the mind abstracts from all outward objects not theoretically but practically without having any kind of interest in the occupations of the world—Yata Chitta Atma Nirasee Aparigraha. These are very difficult requirements. And most of us are incapable of them.

#### Path of Devotion

For us there is the other method, the

method of Bhakti, passivity, surrender, acceptance, claiming nothing, asking nothing. We place ourselves in the hands of the Divine completely. These are passive virtues, virtues which are regarded as more feminine than masculine. Therefore it is said 'Bhagawan Sarvesham Purushah'. There is only one supreme male in this world. All of us are to be regarded as women 'Strprayam rata Sarvam'. In other words, our attitude must be of prayerfulness, must be one of dependence, of complete surrender, passivity, acceptance. Don't claim anything. Ask only for the blessings of the Divine. That is the Bhakti Marga. It is possible for us to adopt this method more easily. The Gopis go about praying to God appealing to Him to become their husband—'Katyayani Mahadevi Sarvaloka Maheshwari, Nanda Gopa Sutam Devi Asmakan Pati'. 'I prostrate myself to you, Mahadevi, my the Lord of Gopis, the Son of Nanda he our husband.'

#### Significance of 'Rasalila'

Well when Rasalila is talked about, the meaning of it is that there is the Universal Lord petitioned and appealed to and begged for favour by all the individuals of the world. The integrity of that one Supreme Spirit is not in any manner affected by the approaches made by millions of individuals. The universality of Sprit and the multiplicity of the beseeching individuals, that is what is attempted to be brought out by what is called Rasalila. One Supreme Lord faces each individual and because he faces some, it does not follow that he does not face others. Well, that is the idea which is brought out by the conception of the Rasalila which has been so thoroughly misinterpreted and misconceived by our people also. You will find therefore it is the method of Bhakti, it is the method of devotion, there is still another for those of executive

temperament who are not made in a reflective or emotional way. Arjuna himself belongs to that class. He gets up and says, "I know I am a Kshatriya. I know it is my duty to fight. But I shall not fight. This is not a thing which I will be able to do. I shall not undertake this fight which has been imposed on me." And what happens to him?

#### The Lord's Will Be Done

We all see that when the duty seems to be irksome, when we find we have to carry a share of pain and unpleasantness, we wish to withdraw from the mandate which is imposed on us. We invent all sorts excuses for the purpose of getting away from what is expected. Ultimately, he is able to enter the truth of things, that is, believes in the spirit which is driving the universe, which is driving him also and he concludes by saying "Karshye Vachanam Tava—I will do as you bid me to do". Similarly, you will find that Jesus Christ raised up his hands and said, "No, I cannot bear all this suffering. Take this cup away from me. This suffering is too much for me. I cannot undertake it". And yet after so much storm and stress he comes to the conclusion 'THY WILL BE DONE'. Yet not my will but Thy will be done. That is what Jesus Christ said, exactly a translation of 'Karshye Vachanam Tava'. Your bidding I will carry out.

Both Arjuna and Jesus first of all wanted that the cup of suffering should be taken away from them. Arjuna did not wish to fight and Jesus was unable to drink the cup and said 'Take this cup away'. Please excuse me, I shall not fight,' says Arjuna. But both of them pass through so much of spiritual evolution that a situation arises when they were able to get up and say, "Yet not my will but Thy will be done". In other words, it is possible for human

individuals without any kind of selfish desire of their own to make themselves the instruments of the cosmic powers, to understand that they are here not merely for the satisfaction of their individual preferences but for co-operating with the universal purpose by realizing that there is a universal purpose. You merely merge yourselves in that purpose and conform to the Divine will and in the process reach your own perfect fulfilment.

So, by acting according to the dictates of the Divine it is possible for you to realize the highest possibilities which are already located in you.

#### Selfless Action

Hence it is said that even action, which seems to us to be dirty, seems to us so unpleasant and unpalatable that we would like to avoid and shrink from it, becomes sometimes the end of God, and we may have to undertake it, and, by undertaking it, do the will of God and know His purpose and understand His Reality much more than by the avoidance of action. The Vishnu Purana says 'Those people who merely cry out the name of God without doing His will are the enemies of God' "Swadharma Karma Vijnanah Krishna Krishneti Vadnah Te harer deeshno madhah dharmanartham janma yadi bareh" Those who are indifferent to their duties in this world but only go about uttering the name of Krishna Krishna, they are the enemies of God. They are ignorant, deluded mortals. Even Hari for the bonds of creation for the upliftment of the world, passed through so many kinds of perils. When He has set an example for us, is it right for us to abstain from the world, from the work which the world demands?

#### Ideal Karma Yoga

Whether it is Dhyana Yoga, Bhakti Marga or Karma Yoga whichever method you adopt, the Ultimate Reality is that

transcendence of the human individual. He is able to get beyond himself, he is detaching himself from the objective surroundings altogether. He is able to adopt an attitude of a detached spectator when he is undertaking the work in this world. Such an individual is what we call a God-realized soul. Such an individual is one who is face to face with the Supreme. He has touched the garment of Eternity. His mind becomes illumined by the Divine Light. His heart is a flame of love and his whole being thirsts for the uplift of suffering humanity. You will see therefore that the highest purpose which is laid on each individual is not merely to be born, to grow up, to mate, to found a family and leave possessions for posterity and then pass out, such things are done by even animals. What the human individual is called upon to do is to realize the Divinity that is there embedded in him.

#### Two Choices

"There are two things for which there is an alternative choice before each human individual 'Yasya Chehaya Amritam Yasya Mrityuh' There are possibilities in each one of us of either Amrita, of eternal life or Mrityu, of death and ashes. Well, if you want to develop Amrita in you, you have to pursue the path of Truth. If on the other hand you want to pass off from death to death, then it is that you are more or less wrapped up in this glamorous world. The highest goal which the Bhagavad Gita puts before us is the goal of practical efficiency combined with philosophical calm. The very last verse of the Bhagavad Gita winds up by saying 'Yatra Yogeshwarah Krishna Yatra Partha Dhannurdharah Tatra Sri Vijsyo Bhutih Dhruva Nittir Matirnmsma' The words are selected deliberately with a definite purpose. The Yoga the contemplative energy of Krishna, that by itself is nothing. You require the archery of

Arjuna Not only the philosopher Yogi, but you require the practical man, the King, philosopher-king of Plato. The Yogi and the Dhyani: putting the energy of contemplation into the austerity of action, combining the two things, bringing about the marriage of contemplation and action, of Dhyana and Karma that is the goal which the Gita has prescribed for us.

#### Conclusion

If you just see what the gospel of the Bhagavad Gita is, you will see it has nothing to do with any kind of ill founded fact or unscientific dogma. It takes human nature as it is. It studies its aspiration for the eternal. It prescribes a way by which that aspiration for the eternal can be realized. It does not want you to surrender your reflective, emotional or practical natures. It merely tells you that man is here on the threshold of a higher life he has reached intellectuality but the climb of life indicates that this is not the goal of evolution. He has to proceed further, that further process cannot be in the development of his physique. It can only be in the development of his psyche, and if it is so, then human intellectuality will have to be converted into illumined consciousness, into inspired understanding, that

acquisition of increased awareness, that expansion of your being, that prolongation of those great moments when human individuals now and then come into touch with the Eternal, when they are, so to say, lifted from this *terra firma* into uplifting air, when they are carried away into the depths of that being when time stands still, when they are able to have a glimpse into that fundamental Reality of which immortality and death are merely the shadows.

If you are able to realize that destiny, you have realized true fulfilment. But if you have not, you might acquire possessions, you might build material worlds you might invent atom bombs and devastate people, but you have failed as a human being. When you realize that goal 'Kulam Pavitram Jeevacee Kritartho Vasundhara Puoyavatee, your mother becomes blessed and the place that gave you birth becomes sacred. If it is possible for you to realize even now in this physical frame that life incorruptible, that life which is the destiny of every human being then it is that human self has reached its goal.

(A lecture delivered at the Karachi Centre of the Ramakrishna Mission in 1945 and reported by Sri R. Ramakrishna. Courtesy of the author and the Ramakrishna Mission)

## KARMA YOGA

Man winneth not freedom from action by abstaining from activity, nor by mere renunciation doth he rise to perfection. Nor can anyone even for an instant, remain really actionless for helplessly is everyone driven to action by the qualities born of nature. Who sitteth controlling the organs of action but dwelling in his mind on the objects of the senses, that bewildered man is called a hypocrite. But who, controlling the senses by the mind O Arjuna with the organs of action without attachment performeth Yoga by action he is worthy. Perform thou right action for action is superior to inaction, and, inactive, even the maintenance of thy body would not be possible.

# Resurgence of Hindu Culture

Sri Swami Ajanananda

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When a person comes safely out of the deadly grip of a terrible disease, there is often to be found a resurgence of life that is noticeable in every limb and every movement. This is true also of the spiritual life of a society. A society, like a living organism, also goes through a process of rejuvenation, after a period of spiritual torpor, and then the pulsations of a fresh and reinvigorated life become manifest through each of its limbs and movements. The spiritual awakening of a society is invariably accompanied by a revival of arts, letters, science, philosophy and, as a matter of fact, by a vigorous display of energy through every phase of its life.

The historical data of India prove this fact conclusively. India has passed through a number of successive phases of ebb and flow in her spiritual life, and with each epoch of religious upheaval there has always been an all embracing renaissance of her cultural life.

### Dawn of Renaissance

The very beginning of the twentieth century is marked unmistakably by a complete recovery of the central self consciousness of the Hindu community which is expressing itself through all the varied activities of its life.

With Swami Vivekananda's preaching of the Universal doctrines of the Veda to the Western countries, the ancient religion of the Hindus has been released from the stigma of being a crude and superstitious creed and it has positively stepped on to a new phase of evangelism that has been even termed "Aggressive Hinduism" by some. The term does connote the fresh missionary zeal infused into Hinduism,

though it does not appear to be quite appropriate in view of the catholic and universal character of its teachings.

Hinduism has become "aggressive" not in the sense of seeking converts to any particular fold, but as confirming the faith of all people in their respective churches by furnishing for them an underlying rationale for all creeds.

Hinduism is not a missionary religion in the same sense as Christianity and Islam are understood. Yet, Hindu missionaries are found in the roles of bold exponents of 'the Hindu view of Life' even before the universities, schools and savants of Europe, America and many other countries, and many among their audience are found to be really interested in the hoary culture of the Hindus. It is a fact that the leading intellectuals of the Occident have become no less enthusiastic in broadcasting Hindu ideas and ideals than the Hindus themselves.

### Growth of Nationalism

Though the National Congress of India was inaugurated in 1885 with the object of bringing about the political advancement of the country through constitutional means, and though the idea of nationalism in India has been developing since then, it is undoubtedly the dawn of the present century that has seen an unprecedented wave of patriotic fervour throughout the land.

Under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, regarded by many as one of the greatest humanists of all times, Indian patriotism, instead of dawdling on narrow and parochial lines, has become broad-based on a genuine feeling of universal brotherhood.

The non-violence creed of the Mahatma, the universalist outlook of Tagore and the message of the innate harmony of diversified faiths and inter-racial concord brought by Ramakrishna and Vivekananda now fired the Indian imagination, giving it a new outlook and a new patriotism.

The growth of national consciousness in modern India is but one aspect of a general renaissance which has stirred the Indian soul to its depths and has produced remarkable changes also in other spheres of life.

For more than a hundred years, India has felt a new spiritual urge towards truth, justice and reason. Her society is being purged of the degrading evils of mediaeval times, and her thoughts have been enlivened and enriched by the spread of education and the evolution of a new culture. The spirit of reform has now permeated various classes of Indian society and has profoundly modified their ideas, habits and customs.

#### Position of Women

The most striking change in the Indian social life of today is in the position of women. Women are not only coming out of their seclusion and receiving educational training but are also taking an active interest in social and political matters and are claiming equal rights as citizens. As a matter of fact the Women's Movement in India has succeeded with a swiftness and to a degree that would have seemed fantastic even a few years earlier. The women themselves have been zealous in making attempts to improve their lot in all possible ways. The Women's Indian Association has rendered valuable service to the cause of the uplift of women. The growth of political consciousness among women in India is strikingly illustrated by the success of the Women's Suffrage Movement since the day when the historic All-India

Women's Deputation waited upon Mr. Montague in Madras on the 18th December, 1917. They gave evidence before the Joint Select Committee on the Government of India Bill, 1919, in support of the extension of the franchise to Indian women. The new Constitution of India gives women equal rights with any other citizen of free India.

#### Social and Educational Progress

Another very important change in the social history of modern India is the gradual change in the condition of the so-called Depressed Class, who like the women of India are awakening from an age-long slumber to a new consciousness. Valuable philanthropic work has been done in this respect by various social service institutions. The influence of the "Harijan movement," started by Mahatma Gandhi, gave the death knell to the age-old custom of untouchability. The Hindu society is being purified from this curse.

But the general awakening of modern India would not have been possible without significant changes in the educational ideas and institutions of the country. Much in the sphere of education was tried and achieved in India during the nineteenth century, and still more has been accomplished in the present century. Under the inspiration of great patriots like the late Tagore and the late Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, educational institutions conforming national ideals with modern academic requirements have been established in different parts of the country by various organizations. During the last quarter of a century new universities have been established in several places, notably Poona, Lucknow, Aligarh, Benaras, Agra, Delhi, Nagpur, Waltair, Mysore, Hyderabad, Chidambaram and Trivandrum. The Indian Women's University at Poona was started in 1916 by Dhondo Keshav Karve.

### Sri R G Bhandarkar as its first Chancellor

The Vishwaharati founded in 1921 by Tagore et Santiniketan Bolpur, is a unique educational institution, famous for its cosmopolitan outlook. It represents a happy blending of the East and the West, of the old and the New India.

### Literary Revival

Several factors, such as growing contact with the outside world, eager yearning for the revival of the cultural treasures of the past, the desire to reform all aspects of life, and speculations about the problems of commonwealth and common woe, have profoundly stimulated Indian thought and have resulted in a comprehensive cultural renaissance, the influence of which is visible on modern Indian literature as well as its art.

Indeed, we have a new age for the Indian provincial literatures, each of which presents a harmonious blending of Eastern ideas with those of the West. High-class works have been produced during the last hundred years in different branches of literature, like fiction, drama, poetry, essay, biographies and auto-biographies. Some Indians have to their credit world-acclaimed writings in English, too.

One very striking feature of the Indian cultural renaissance is manifested in the spirit of research which animates the study of the past history and antiquities of India. Since the foundation of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta in 1784, a large number of European as well as Indian scholars have devoted themselves earnestly to this branch of study, and their labours have produced marvellous results.

### Archaeological Research

The Ancient Monuments Preservation Act for the protection of historic monuments and relics, and also for State control over the excavation of ancient sites and

traffic in antiquities, gave an immense impetus to the cause of research. Under the guidance of the Archaeological Department of the Government of India and a few other institutions valuable scientific excavations, which have considerably modified many of the old views about the ancient history of India, have been made on historic sites.

Those at Mohenjo-daro in Sind, Harappa and Taxila in the Punjab, Patliputra and Nalanda in Bihar, Paharpur, Mahasthan and Bangar in Bengal, Sanchi in the Bhopal State, Sarnath near Benares and Nagarjunakonda in the Madras Presidency, deserve special mention. Some of the Indian universities, notably the universities of Calcutta, Benaras and Madras, and organizations like the All-India Oriental Conference, the Oriental Institute at Lahore, the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute and the Eherat Itibasa Samsodhaka Mandala at Poona, the Indian Historical Records Commission and the Vanqiya Sahitya Parishad, are giving considerable impetus to the scientific study of Indian history and antiquities.

### Science, Philosophy, Politics

Indians have also made in the present century remarkable progress in the study of science, philosophy and politics. The valuable discoveries of Sir J C Bose, Sir P C Ray, Sir C V Raman, Dr Meghnad Saha and the anthropological studies of Rai Bahadur S C Roy have earned them a wide reputation. The cause of scientific research in India is being further strengthened by scientific surveys, like the Zoological Survey of India, the Botanical Survey of India, the Geological Survey of India, eleven National Laboratories at Research Institution, and by the activities of the Indian Science Congress.

Attention is also being devoted to philosophical studies, through the inspira-

tion of teachers like Sir B N Seal, Sir S Radhakrishnan, and others.

The Indian universities have now become keenly interested in the study of Political Science, and much useful work has been done by the Indian Institute of Political and Social Science.

### Fine Arts

The spirit of renaissance has also produced a finer appreciation and cultivation of the Fine Arts such as painting and music. The artistic renaissance of India owes a great deal to E B Havell, Abanindranath Tagore, Naodalal Bose and Dr A K Coomaraswamy. As with painting, there has been a revival of sculpture and architecture, also. Modern Indian architecture divides itself sharply into classes (1) that of indigenous India, to be found chiefly in the Indian States, particularly in Rajputana, and (2) that based on imitation of Western models. During the recent years, with resurgent nationalism, there has been a tendency to revive old architectural styles.

New schools for the scientific study and practice of Indian music vocal as well as instrumental have sprung up in Calcutta, Bombay, Pnooa Baroda, Chidambaram and several other places.

Earnest efforts are being made to revive indigenous types of dances and drama. In South India good work is being done to revive and develop Kathakali. Tagore's Vishwaharit the Travancore University and the Kerala Kalamandalam are giving great encouragement in this line.

Thus in every branch of thought and activity of Indian life there has been an appreciable resurgence with the beginning of this century and through each the cultural self-consciousness of the people has been asserting itself.

Free India marches on along the road of the high ideals of her ancient spiritual

culture. The march might be slow yet India is progressing on a vast scale. And the progress may well be likened to the course of a river originating as a streak, enlarging into a silvery stream flowing along the mountain side, cutting through glen and forest swelling into a torrent, sweeping from a precipitous edge into a bottomless valley, and finally moving steadily along the broad and easy plains to merge finally with the ocean.

Its spectacular stages are over. The waters have to be dammed and their level raised behind a barrage, to be canalized so as to fertilize the lands they irrigate.

The waters of Swaraj have now formed the bed and are waiting their utilization. They may appear tranquil but they are not stagnant.

### Choice Before Humanity

Today humanity is at the cross roads and modern civilization faces its gravest crisis. The second World-War ended and the atom bomb became the symbol of the new age. The stockpile of them mounts up. Talks for the international control of atomic energy have broken down so many times without leaving any hope for the future.

In this connection it is well to remember the words of General Omar N Bradley, the former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of U S armed forces. He said Our only complete assurance of surviving World War III is to halt it before it starts. The atom bomb is far more than a military weapon. It may—as Bernard Baruch once said—contain the choice between the quick and the dead. We dare not forget that the advantage in atomic warfare lies with aggression and surprise. If we become engaged in an atom bomb race we may simply pull ourselves to sleep behind an atomic stockpile. The way to win an atomic war is to make certain it never starts.

With the most disastrous weapons man already has humanity is in danger of being trapped in this world by its moral adolescence Our knowledge of science has clearly outstripped our capacity to control it We have too many men of science too few men of God We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount Man is stumbling blindly through a spiritual darkness while toying with the precarious secrets of life and death The world has achieved brilliance without wisdom power without conscience Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants

Yes War is a horrible thing and constantly growing more horrible and dreadful so that unless it is ended once and for all it will certainly end human society

#### Need for Religious Resurgence

Mr H G Wells however raises one's hopes by remarking towards the close of his *Outline of History* But out of the trouble and tragedy of this present time there may emerge a moral and intellectual revival a religious revival of a simplicity and scope to draw together men of alien races and now discrete traditions into one common and sustained way of living for the world's service

Religious emotion—stripped of corruptions and freed from its last priestly entanglements—may presently blow through life again like a great wind bursting the doors and flinging open the shutters of the individual life and making many things possible and easy that in these present days of exhaustion seem almost too difficult to desire

Wells' intellect has perhaps visualized the correct picture of the happy future His robust optimism may infuse hope and enthusiasm into the bleeding heart of Mankind

But he cannot yet assure us as to when and where this moral intellectual and religious revival is to begin its beneficent course He points out nevertheless that such an epoch making revival is likely to have a very humble beginning and not to come upon the world to the beat of drums

He says The beginnings of such things are never conspicuous Great movements of the racial soul come at first like a thief at night and then suddenly are discovered to be powerful and worldwide

#### Emergence of a New Era

One observing with critical eyes can discern the dawn of a glorious new era in the eastern sky India has produced in recent times several outstanding great men whose lives and thoughts have influenced the whole world—Ramakrishna Vivekananda Aurobindo Tagore Gandhi and such others

The cohesive force emanating from the lives of these greatest sons of India symbolizes the fundamental unity and harmony of the faiths and peoples of this diversified land It is sure to have a far-reaching effect on the world at large

In the memorable words of Swami Vivekananda Once more the wheel is turning up once more vibrations have been set in motion in India which are destined at no distant date to touch the farthest limits of the earth Before the effulgence of this new awakening the glory of all past revivals will pale like stars before the rising sun

Let us pray with Tagore  
 Where the mind is without fear  
 and the head is held high  
 Where knowledge is free  
 Where the world has not been broken up into  
 fragments by narrow domestic walls  
 Where words come out from the depth of  
 truth

Where tireless striving stretches  
its arms towards perfection.

Where the clear stream of reason has not  
lost its way into the dreary desert sand  
of dead habit

Where the mind is led forward by Thee into  
ever-widening thought and action—  
into that heaven of freedom, my Father  
let my country awake!"

## Meaning of the Vedas

Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar

The study of the Vedas is not merely a cultural appurtenance, but is full of deep, symbolic significance and designed really to effect the mental and spiritual regeneration of the people. It is deplorable to notice that certain unintelligent ways in which the Vedas had been approached and commented upon recently even by learned men. One group of people considered the Vedas as a human document dealing with the exploits of Veja, Agni and so on typifying either the forces of Nature or embodying certain personalities. There were others who considered the Vedas as having a meaning not apparent on the face of it, but denoting something scientific, literary, meteorological, astronomical and so on.

There were others who treated the Vedas as geological documents. Quite recently another school of ingenious writers had come into being. There was a book called, 'The Vedic India' published sometime ago under the auspices of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan. That book contained contributions by Professors and Doctors of Literature and Philosophy hailing from several Universities and centres of learning. The whole idea underlying that book was that the Rig Veda was practically a coöperation of the Brahmins, the Sama Veda was of course a musical text book. So far as the Yajur Veda was concerned, it was a sacrificial treatise mainly devoted to the preparation of the 'Vedi' and the actual implementation of sacrificial rites. The Atharva Veda, according to them was a chronicle of the gradual conquest by the

less evolved Aryan group of the more evolved Aryan group.

It seemed that if they were not to be obsessed with any of the conceptions and approached the Vedas as a humble and inquiring student, they would see that there were interpretations available which made out the Vedas to be no infant lispings of an evolving civilization, nor the juvenile pranks of a group of men who were emerging from barbarism to comparative civilization. In my view that interpretation alone was correct and valid which dealt with the Vedas as a manual not only of worship but of the imaginative concept of the Universe.

The word 'Anna' occurring in the Vedas did not mean the material food but meant a form of creative energy. It was clear that out of the Universe out of sunlight and certain gases came all the Apsa. What Anna meant really had now been proved to be the various forms of energy transmuted into substantial forms. The Vedas are to be regarded as scriptures designed to rest the minds on basic conceptions and to give refuge and consolation. If that was so, their study would be of great importance.

Our ancestors had laid emphasis on Nada or Sabda and they came to the conclusion that certain sounds uttered in the proper manner with proper intonation, with the proper iteration and reiteration produced certain metaphysical, psychological and physical effects. That was a truth which was being proved over and over again.

## Kashmir Saivism

Sri J. Rudrappa, M.A., LL.B.

Saivism is an ancient living faith in the world. The finds at Mohenjo daro and Harappa have shown that the cult of Siva was current as far back as 3,000 BC Sir John Marshall who is closely connected with the discoveries at Mohenjo daro says 'Among the many revelations that Mohenjo daro and Harappa have had in store for us none perhaps is more remarkable than this discovery that Saivism has a history going back to the Chalcolithic Age or perhaps even further still, and that it thus takes its place as the most ancient living faith in the world'. Saivism which primarily had its birth in India had spread to far off countries such as Cambodia, Java, Bali, in the Far East Mexico in North America and other places where we still see the marks of the existence of the Sivalinga or of Siva temples. Apart from its antiquity and the extension of its influence we are familiar with Saivism in India as a great and live religion with a potent philosophy behind it.

Saivism in India may be broadly classified under three heads, viz., Kashmir Saivism prevalent in the north, Virasavism in the Dacca-Karnataka and Saiva Siddhanta in the Tamil Nad. Though there are differences inter se as regards some of the tenets and observances of these three branches, we yet notice some fundamental principles operating as the basis in all these systems. Kashmir Saivism which is a system of philosophic thought founded on the basis of the Sivagamas and Tantras as well as on logic and intuitive experiences of elevated souls furnishes us the main characteristics of all Saivite thought and religion. The doctrine of recognition, the main theme of Kashmir

Saivism, is nothing but realistic idealism and it has thrown considerable light on the perennial problems of philosophy. A close study of this system of philosophy must benefit any thinking man and the practice and observances of this system based on Yoga and experience surely elevate the soul as can be seen from the history of the Saivite Siddha Purushas of Kashmir.

### Sivasutras

The doctrine of recognition as conceived and developed in the Sivadvaita system of Kashmir Saivism enlightens us on the points referred to above. This school of Advaita philosophy took its root in Kashmir in the ninth century AD and flowered until about the fourteenth century AD. This philosophy is founded on Sivasutras or aphorisms which contain the whole doctrine by implication. The commentaries on these Sutras have developed the doctrine by going often far beyond the suggestion of the Sutras. Sage Vasugupta is stated to have been the first exponent of this system of Advaita philosophy based on Sivasutras and Sivagamas. There is a legendary story as to how he obtained the Sivasutras. Sage Vasugupta was residing in his hermitage on Mahadevagiri in the Himalayan region of Kashmir. One night he dreamt a dream in which Siva appeared and disclosed to him the existence of Sivasutras containing the essence of Sivasastra on a boulder on Mahadevagiri peak. The sage on waking, went and touched the rock as instructed. The rock with the inscribed Sivasutras turned over and the Sivasutras came into view. Vasugupta taught these Sutras with their meanings to

his pupils and spread this divine knowledge. Though the rock is still pointed out, no trace, however, of the inscribed Sutras is visible now. Anyhow the rock goes by the name of Sankaropal. The other version about the origin of these Sivasutras is that Siva himself appeared in a dream to Vasugupta and revealed to him whatever may be the real origin of the Sivasutras or how Vasugupta obtained them, it is an undeniable fact that Kashmir Saivism is founded on Sivasutras which are now available. The Sivasutras do not merely enunciate the philosophical principles of Advaita Saivism but also show man a practical way of realizing by experience the fact that man is no other than the Lord Paramasiva. These Sutras help him by virtue of realization not only to attain absolute freedom from all that binds him and subjects him as a helpless creature to the sorrows and sufferings of limited existence, to repeated births and deaths and to their attendant consequences but also to gain omniscience like the Lord himself as one with him and to wield all that power of creation and destruction which He (God) himself wields. This is the real object of the Sivasutras which are devoted to an exposition of the means to an end rather than to the philosophical or descriptive exposition of the end itself. This knowledge was transmitted by Vasugupta to his disciples Kailata and others. Amongst the scholars who propagated this knowledge mention may be made of four important persons. Somananda provided a solid foundation to this system of Saivism in his Sivadristi in consonance with Salvagamas. Next came Utpaladeva who systematized the doctrines in Isvara Pratyabhijnika Karika. The greatest of these spiritual personalities is Mahamahesvara Charya Abhinava-gupta, a disciple of Utpaladeva. He is connected with this system

as Sri Sankaracharya is connected with Suddhadvaita. His extraordinary intellectual and spiritual power made his pen so powerful that even in this day he is recognized as the highest authority on the monistic Saivism or Realistic Idealism. He has also written authoritative works on dramaturgy and poetics. He is the last word so far as poetical theories of Rasa and Dhvani are concerned. The last in the series of worthy contributors is Kshemaraaja who propagated this knowledge by his numerous works.

#### Realistic Idealism

Kashmir Saivism is called by different names—Trika, Spanda-astra and Pratyabhijna-astra. These branches of the same school of thought deal with different aspects of this system. This school of philosophy is called the Realistic Idealism of Kashmir.

In Kashmir Saivism the dominating idea is that the individual self is no other than the Lord Paramasiva himself with his powers limited. The object of this system is to make the individual self to discover, understand and experience his native state, the all blissful Siva-twa or pure consciousness. The conceptions and perceptions which the individual self experiences are not different from his being because his is an aspect of universal consciousness, consequently we see that all cognition whether subjective or objective is recognition. The individual self by his very nature is capable of becoming omniscient but there are certain hindrances in the way. These hindrances will have to be removed. The doctrine of recognition as enunciated in this system will help man to solve the problem for the removal of hindrances by right knowledge from scriptures, preceptorial instruction and individual effort and practices. Earlier writers

of this system who preceded Abinavagupta pointed out three ways to the realization of the ultimate reality, viz., the Samkhava, the Saka and the Anava in the Spanda branch of the Trika. Pratyahijna writers attempted to establish the existence of an all integrating universal self and to point out a way to freedom from worldly trouble through recognition. Ahhnavagupta put this branch of knowledge on a rational basis by his philosophical conceptions and metaphysical theories realized through psychological practices. He was a Siddhasarsha.

### Main Topics

The main topics of Kashmir Saivism are God, world, soul, bondage and salvation. The Supreme God is called Paramamvit Chit or Paramasiva. He is Anuttara, i.e., there is nothing beyond Him. He is beyond time, space and causality. He is unrelated and He is absolute bliss, Parparanandaghana. He is Prakasa vimarsamaya. He can manifest himself in various forms at will. Vimarsa is internal perception. He can see himself and the universe in perfect identity. His principal attributes, powers or qualities are the five Saktis viz., Chit, Ananda, Iccha, Jnana and Kriya (pure consciousness, bliss with power, power of knowledge, and creative power or action force). These will be in a dormant state, calm as the waters of a waveless ocean (Praanta Sagata), in the transcendental stage of Paramasiva. When the Lord desires to create the world the Saktis assume the dynamic form. Out of the five Saktis three of them, viz., Iccha, Jnana and Kriya manifest themselves in various forms. The other two will continue in their original form but with a limited scope in this created world. The entire world is therefore the manifestation of Saktis which are inseparable from the supreme Lord Paramasiva. Paramasiva has two aspects trans-

cendental and immanent. In the transcendental aspect these five Saktis will be in an unmanifested state. Lord Paramasiva is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent even in the immanent state.

Lord Paramasiva created this world out of his free-will and on his own accord (Lila and Svatantra Sakti). He is the absolute reality both in His transcendental and immanent aspects. So the world which is the manifestation of the Lord himself is absolutely real. The world is not separate from him. Similarly, Paramasiva has manifested himself in two forms—the experient and the experienced. The experient is (Grahaka) the individual soul and the experienced is (Grahya) the universe or the objective world. The experient or the finite self is no other than the Lord himself with limited powers.

### Creation

The universe is divided into thirty-six categories. These are grouped in two ways, as pure order and impure order. The pure order is divided into five subdivisions (Siva, Sakti, Sadasiva, Isvara and Sndhavidya). Out of these five categories the first two will not undergo any dual change though these are the potential sources for further divisions from Maya down to earth. The categories Sadasiva, Isvara and Sndhavidya are the subtle stages at which the duality manifests itself on conscious level. The impure order consists of thirty one categories from Maya down to earth. The duality becomes more explicit in this order. We also see the working of the Maya in all the states of this impure order. Maya is the primeval cause of the entire lower order. Maya obscures the true nature of the self. Within his power, brings about differentiation and multiplication. Maya is real toasmuch as it is the creation of the Supreme Lord. Paramasiva the absolute reality, Maya is

the most distinctive power of the universal self in its creative aspect. It manifests diversity and is also the force of obscuration. Maya is the principle pervading the whole of the lower creation of the impure order. It is beyond the comprehension of our senses. As an aspect of the universal self it is eternal. It is the first product of the impure order.

#### Sentient and Insentient Manifestations

The impure creation may be divided into sentient and insentient manifestations. In the sentient group may be classed the individual self whose powers have been further limited by the force of Maya. In the pure order the individual self had already undergone the limitation of will-power (Icchsaakti) This limitation of power is called Anavamala or innate ignorance. In the impure order, Mayasakti has limited the power of consciousness (Ucchasakti) and has been the cause of Mayavamala. The creative power (Kriyasakti) of the self has been reduced or limited by Maya and is called Karmamala.

The first products of Maya are the 'Pancha Kanchukas' or the five sheaths of the individual soul. These are nothing other than the limited powers of the five attributes of the Lord, viz., consciousness, bliss, will-power, power of knowledge and creative (dynamic aspects) power. In the pure order the powers Sarvajnatva, Ssrvakartrutva, Sarvavyapakatva, Niyatva and Paripurnatva, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence or pervasiveness, eternity and perfectness, become reduced to Vidya (limited consciousness), Kala (limited creation), Niyati (regulation or restriction), Kaata (limited duration) and Raga (limited interest). These limitations are subjective in nature and are collectively called five Kanchukas, i.e., shaaths or cloaks of the Purusha. The individual self who is thus associated with three impurities stated above and five Kanchukas, is called Purusha.

Further product of this manifestation and the source of the creation of the objective world is Prakriti. This Prakriti is the repository of the three principal qualities (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) brightness, active force and inertia. These three qualities in this Prakriti-Tattva are in a state of equilibrium. These qualities are powers of the Parasakti in the objective creation. By the variation of these three qualities further creation takes place. Buddhi, Ahankara and Manas are the next Tattvas in the order of succession. Buddhi is the power of discrimination. Ahankara is the identification of personal ego. This may be termed as artificial identification of universal self. This identification or 'I'-ness is limited and confined to the physical body or life. Manas is the powerful picture making instrument of receiving different perceptions and forming images. This intervenes between the senses and Ahankara. The difference between Ahankara and Manas is that the former is static and the latter is kinetic.

Next we come to the general principle of sensible experience. Ahankara divides itself into three sub-divisions in the further process of creation, viz., Satvikahankara, Rajasahankara and Tamasahankara. The nil-shoots of Tamasahankara, are the five Tanmstras and the five Bhutas or gross elements. The off shoots of Satvikahankara are the sense faculties.

Rajasahankara is an active force co-operating in the form of the above two lines of creation. Lord Paramasiva has two aspects, transcendental and immanent. He also assumes the form of individual self in several stages from Siva down to the bound-Jiva. The transcendental supreme being is all-blissful, self-existence, unrelated, independent (Svatantra) and self luminous. The immanent supreme being is all-pervading and is the underlying principle o-

subjective and objective activities. In this aspect he sustains the universe. As individual self he is no other than Siva himself with his powers limited. This voluntary limitation of powers is by His Lila or sport. The voluntary limitation of powers is called Akhyati, self-imposed unawareness of his true nature. Lord Paramasiva has descended from the transcendental state to the individual self in seven grades of consciousness. In the ascending order the individual self resolves himself in the Lord through the same evolutionary process by extension of consciousness.

#### Individual Self

The seven stages of the individual self are as follows:

Lord Paramasiva is pure consciousness. In the immanent aspect in the universe he is called Siva the first category of thirty-six Tattvas. Even as Siva he retains the undivided state of consciousness. When the first movement or vibration occurs in Siva the Saktis or powers unfold them selves.

The Saktitattva is the second in order and is the source of creation of the universe. From the third category of Sadashiva-tattva the differentiation of the experient and the experienced begins. Here the experienced is called Mantramahesvara. Next in order comes Mantravaya in the Isvara-tattva and Mantra is Suddhavidya tattva. The three individual selves above named are omniscient. The differentiation is on a conscious level in respect of subject and object. After Suddhavidya tattva and before Mayataittha Vijnanakala comes in. He is also omniscient. The whole universe is an object to him.

When this individual self is wrapped up with Maya, Kanchukas and Antshkarana he is called Pralayakala. He has no physical body or sensory organs. His vision is conditioned or limited by Kanchukas and

Puryashtaka, a subtle body which is composed of eight elements, viz., the five Tanmatras, and Maanas, Ahankara and Buddhi.

The individual self with Puryashtaka who associates with the physical body and sensory organs is called Sakala. He is associated with three Males or impurities viz., Aava Mayiye and Karma. The first impurity is Anava. It is the innate ignorance which is the outcome of the limitation of will-power (Icchasakti). Mayiyamala is the limitation of the power of ordinary consciousness. It is this impurity which brings on the differentiation of the experient and the experienced and leads the individual on to several births and deaths according to the merits and demerits of his actions. The third kind of impurity is Karmamala which is the limitation of creative power. The individual self, Sakala is associated with these three impurities and is also subjected to opposites, (Dvaadas) such as pleasure and pain, birth and death, etc. The lineage of bondage is thus completed. Thus we see that Lord Paramasiva assumes these several forms out of his own free will and on his own accord by self imposed limitation of powers and has come down to the state of individual self, Sakala. Even in this state of bondage the individual self potentially possesses the all blissful Sivahood. By individual effort he will be able to extend his consciousness and eventually achieve the final stage of Sivatva. Some people think that Lila has taken the form of bondage but it is not so. Every action of Lila or sport is a manifestation of bliss. Even in the literary or material sense Lila or sport means voluntary acceptance or satisfaction. In this system of philosophy these seven stages of individual self, Aims are called Saptapramatras.

Abhinavagupta suggests realistic exposi-

tion of the several stages of individual self or the evolution of seven stages of consciousness as follows

In the waking state Jagat the individual self experiences the objective world through his senses with his mind. In this state the four main principles—soul, mind, sense faculties and object (Atma, Manas, Indriyas and Vishayas) will be fully in operation in all his perception and conception. This is the experience of the individual in the Sakala state. The experience in the dream state is akin to the experience in the waking state except that the sensory object will be absent. This is the experience of Pralayakala. In this state, soul, mind and sense faculties will be in operation. In the deep sleep state there is neither the sensory object nor the action of senses. These will be in a state of rest. This is called Brahmasamapatti in the Upaishads. In deep sleep the individual self embraces the Supreme, i.e., he identifies himself with the immanent aspect of Paramasiva for the time being. In this state of deep sleep, mind including the senses will be at rest. He is unable to explain the details of his experience in deep sleep state, because this experience is indefinable in human language. He cannot express consciously what he experiences in that deep sleep state. This is the experience of Vijnanakala. In short the differences may be stated like this. In the waking state all the four principles—soul, mind, sense faculties and object will act. In the dream state soul, mind and sense faculties will be in operation. In deep sleep state the individual self will be in a state of unconscious feeling. In this state he identifies himself with the unconscious feeling of Vijnanakala.

\*In the process of evolution of consciousness Kashmir Saivism has classified the different levels of consciousness from the individual self to Sivahood in seven stages viz. Sakala, Pralayakala, Vijnanakala, Mantra, Mantravesvara, Mantramahesvara and Siva or Pramatusiva. These seven stages are called Saptapramatus.

### Turiya and Turiyatita

Beyond these states there are the Turiya and Turiyatita. Turiya comprises of three evolutionary stages of the self viz., Mantra, Mantravesvara and Mantramahesvara. These are associated with one impurity, viz., Anavamala, which brings about duality only on conscious level. The experience of these three states is bliss itself. The last stage of Turiyatita is the state of Sivahood, the seventh and the ultimate state of consciousness. Here in this state the seventh Pramatusiva is free from duality and Anavamala and experiences absolute bliss.\*

### Parasnakti

The powers of Paramasiva are innumerable. The expression of the secreted beings to convey their ideas to others is one such power. Primarily this is in the form of soured Sound is of two forms, articulate and inarticulate. From the articulate soured many languages have sprung up. Language consists of sentences, words and letters. Letters consist of vowels combination of vowels and consonants and Anusvaras. In the Sanskrit language there are fifty-one letters. The first letter is ए (A) the last letter is ए (E). The combination of ए the first letter and ए the last letter with the Anusvara 'O' will become ए (Aham) the first flutter of the sound which emanated from Lord Paramasiva at the time of creation. This ए stands for Anuttara, the omniscient One.

The letters of the alphabet which owe their origin from ए to ए represent in succession Para, Pasyanti, Madhyama and Vaikhari—the four stages of the utterance.

The vowels stand for Siva. The consonants stand for Sakti. The combination

of a vowel and a consonant becomes a letter. Similarly the combination of Siva and Sakti is Yamaia, the origin of the universe. Thus the whole creation is based on the combination of Siva and Sakti. The letters are only the symbols representing the whole creation.

The entire creation consists of Vachya and Vachaka, the twofold manifestation. Vachya is the manifested universe and Vachaka the speech—the expression—emanated from the supreme Lord, Paramasiva in four stages—Para, Pasyanti, Madhyama and Vaikhari. The self luminous Paramasiva who potentially possesses the universe is Para. This Para is self luminous undivided and dynamic. Speech originates from Para. The next stage is Pasyanti. It is here that diversity, in the manifestation of speech visualizes and divides begins indeterminately (Akuta). In the Madhyama stage the division of the experimenter and the experienced is determined though not distinct or explicit. In the Vaikhari stage the division is complete and determinate and becomes articulate or inarticulate speech. Here the vowels and consonants and their combinations assume concrete shape and convey different meanings and collective ideas. The individual who is bound is now conditioned by dualities of the Grahya and the Grahaka or Vachya and Vachaka (experienced and experimenter). The whole universe is the creation of Vachya and Vachaka. The aspirant who wants to transcend this Vachya Vachaka Bhava or diversity or duality has to concentrate on the four divisions of this Paravak or Pranassakti in the ascending order and identify himself in Para which is the embodiment of Svatantra Sakti of the supreme Lord. Vachya Vachaka Bhava is the cause of opposites such as pleasure and pain, birth and death, etc. The individual who transcends this Vachya Vachaka Bhava

will be free from the opposites of pleasures and pains, birth and death, etc and enjoys supreme bliss.

#### Pranassakti

The Saktis according to this school of thought are many and varied. One of the principal aspects is Pranassakti, the motive and sustaining force (Samviti Prak Prana Pratista). The immanent aspect of Paramasiva sustains and controls this universe by this dynamic Pranassakti. This is both universal and individual. The changes and transmigration of the material world are due to the ever working Pranassakti. Bereft of this Sakti life in any sphere means decay. In our common usage we say 'life becomes extinct'. This indicates that the former state of the being has been dissolved. In human beings this aspect has been made more explicit. The physical and psychological practices such as (Pransyams Dhyana and Dharens) are connected with this Pranassakti. Voluntary and involuntary movements in our physical body are controlled by this power, Pranassakti. The various activities of the entire material world are the offshoots of this Pranassakti. This is not merely a physical force or a psychological force but a psycho physical force. Similarly all activities subjective or objective of the individual self are based on this Pranassakti (Sarvam Prane Pratisthitam).

#### Abhasavada

The underlying principle of the universe is pure consciousness. The world of ever changing forms or appearances is the expression of consciousness of the ultimate reality. There is apparently difference between being and becoming. Our perception is confined to the diversities in the objective forms. The forms appear and disappear but the Being is unchanging, everlasting and self-existent. In our individual consciousness we experience the same variations in a limited degree. We

see hear touch, think, feel, imagine and speculate several things. The pictures pass into our mind in procession but the Being who is (Adbhava), the basis of all those appearances and activities is unchaosing and unimpinging notwithstanding these contradictory variations. Every thing that is changing rises from this eternal silent consciousness as waves in an ocean and ultimately merges into it. This is Ahvara. It is a chaosing variation upon the unchanging consciousness. Perceptions, conceptions, objects of any form and experience are all Ahvaras.

The appearances or Ahvaras are real in the sense that they are aspects of the ultimate reality, Paramasiva. They are non-existent in the real, in the forms in which we, the limited beings, experience them. The whole Universe is Ahvara to Paramasiva. The conceptions and perceptions of any kind are Ahvaras for the individual self.

A rational analysis of these Ahvaras will enable the Sadhaka to strictly adhere to the unchanging consciousness which is identical with his true nature. This is one of the important aspects of recognition (*Priyatattva*).

Creation, preservation, absorption, obscuration and conferring grace are the five functions of Paramasiva. Out of his free will He creates the Universe, i.e., He unfolds the universe on His own canvas (*Svecchaya Svabhavita Visva Mumukshutati*) by the power of His own will. He preserves the created Universe and controls it according to His own plan (*Sthiti*) and absorbs it within Himself at the end of the cyclic period, (*Samkara*). Next He keeps the absorbed Universe within Himself in an unmanifested form so as to recreate it according to His will and wish. This is the function of obscuration (*Tirodhana*). Lastly through

His compassionate grace He redeems the individual selves (Anugraha).

The individual self in a similar manner performs constantly these five functions in a limited sphere. His mental perceptions are his creation. Retention of what he perceives is preservation. Merging of these perceptions into consciousness is absorption. The deposit of these perceptions in consciousness (Chit) with the idea of recalling them before his mind whenever necessary is called obscuration. The complete merging into consciousness without reappearing is Anugraha or grace. This can be illustrated by an example from our daily experience. The flash of a thought or idea in our mind is creation. The retention of that thought or idea is preservation. The flashing of another idea gives rise to absorption of the original idea. The depositing of the old idea absorbed in consciousness with the idea of bringing it back whenever necessary is obscuration. The complete merging of the same idea into Chit without its emergence is grace.

Our mind is a mine of ideas accumulated from time immemorial. These ideas are called Vikalpas. The ideas are the source of all our pleasures and pains. It is very difficult to get rid of these impressions or ideas. These are obstructions to the evolution or extension of our consciousness. Anugraha is the only means to liquidate these ideas in consciousness since all ideas emanate from the same source. The more we liquidate these ideas into consciousness the more we get extension of consciousness. By this kind of psychological analysis we become conscious of our actions and reactions of the various ideas. We will then try to transcend the mental plane which is the basis of all these conflicting and divergent ideas.

When the individual reflects as to the

source of his impressions and their transfiguration is the light of the five functions stated above he will realize that the pure Chit or consciousness is the basis of all these transformation and manifestations This is one of the means for the identification of his native state From an analysis of the five functions above named the limited self also experience that he is no other than Paramasiva

#### Nature of Bondage

The all blissful supreme Being has several powers consciousness (Jnanaasakti), remembrance (Smriliikshakti) and power of obscuration (Apobhanasakti) In the pure order of creation the voluntary limitation of the power of consciousness is Anavamala Duality created by this Anavamala on conscious level is the basis of further impurities of the lower order of creation The individual self with the association of categories of the impure order further limits his conscious powers in the form of Mayiyamala and Karmamala The three impurities are the three aspects of bondage The Karmamala is the result of the performance of worldly duties and its effects This can be minimized by performing the duties prescribed by the sacred scriptures (Saivaagamas) We see in the scriptures the duties classified in two categories, the one is the ethical or moral duties and the other comprises duties which help a person in his self-illumination The moral duties are connected with his social life and leads him on to a life of righteousness It is also beneticent to his fellow-beings The other duties like the worship of God, psychological practices, meditation, concentration, acquisition of intellectual knowledge, reflection of spiritual knowledge are all connected with subjective illumination The effects follow the nature of duties The people are at liberty to choose their duties which are

helpful for a peaceful worldly life which becomes fecundative in the next world If the Karmamala is minimized in the course of evolution, Mayiyamala automatically disappears If the Karmamala is minimized by conduct and right conduct it ends with the physical body The Mayiyamala bereft of Karmamala has no power to retain the Jiva in bondage or rebirth In the essence of Mayiyamala and the Karmamala in the ascending order of evolution the Anavamala disappears By absorbing Karmamala through the extension of consciousness, the self transcends Mayiyamala which constitutes the thirty categories of the lower order and marches on in the upward direction through the stages of Vijnanakala, Mantra, Mantresvara, Mantishevara and finally reaches Sivahood or Sivatva By individual effort one can experience his true nature intermittently in the seven stages of consciousness which he potentially possesses

#### Pretyebhima

The principle of recognition is noticeable in our daily activities Consciously or unconsciously all our activities are based on this principle of recognition For instance, we see a particular thing or a particular person at a particular time and in a particular place After a lapse of time we again see the same thing or person in a different place and at a different time We recognize and identify the thing or person with our experiences of the former occasion Now the place is changed, some of the features of the thing or person are changed but we still recognize the past experience by remembrance and the present perception of the thing or person are identical (Grahanasmaranayoh Atkyam) This kind of recognition can be had in various ways such as sense perception inference, a verbal testimony (Sahdapravmana) and the like or by the combination

of these two or three means of knowledge The Idea of recognition in this system is somewhat peculiar. The individual self being instructed by sacred scriptures and Gurus (preceptors) grasps the meaning and the spirit of the Universe and the Supreme Being. By the assimilation of this kind of knowledge there will be an awakening in him to experience his true nature and a desire to be free from the trammels of Samsara, the cycle of births and deaths. This kind of awakening or urge even by spiritual knowledge will happen through the grace of Lord Paramasiva. After he gets the grace of Lord Paramasiva he contemplates, differentiates his own being as composed of thirty-six categories and verifies this with the knowledge of the scriptures and arrives at the conclusion that he is not different from Paramasiva. Such an identification with the transcendental Reality is called self-recognition.

The object of this kind of knowledge is to remove the veil and to expose what is hidden, thus making self-recognition possible. Professor Gowell's translation of Utpata's passage in the Isvara Pratyabhijna Karika illustrates this theory well:

"A certain damsels hearing of the many qualities of a particular gallant, fell in love with him even before she had seen him and agitated by her passion and unable to suffer the pain of not seeing wring to him a love letter descriptive of her condition. He at once came to her, but when she saw him she did not recognize in him the qualities she had heard about; he appeared much the same as any other person and she found no gratification in his society. As soon as she recognized those qualities when her companion now pointed them out she was fully gratified." Similarly though the individual self is identical with the Supreme yet we cannot get the happiness in this identity unless we

become conscious of it or experience or realize it. Though we are conversant with the knowledge of the scriptures regarding God, Self and the World, we still remain unidentified with the Supreme Being. The identification with the Supreme as we have just pointed out in the above illustration depends upon initiation from an enlightened preceptor and the practices of various means prescribed as Upayas in this system.

The aim of this system is Self-realization and the means by which this end is to be achieved is by removing the veil of ignorance which may be achieved either by the knowledge of the scriptures, preceptorial instruction or by self-revelation as emphasized by Abhinavagupta as "Sasikalah, Gurulah and Svatah".

### Saktipata

One of the distinguishing features of all systems of Saivism is Saktipata or Sivagnisraha. It is called the divine grace. This redemptive grace is one of the five principal functions of Lord Paramasiva. It is independent of human action. Whatever may be the intellectual or spiritual knowledge one may possess there is no guarantee that he will attain Self realization unless he is blessed with the grace of the Lord. Mahamahesvaracharya Abhinavagupta of Kashmir Sivadvaita fame has very clearly explained in his Tentrasloka as to when how and with what qualifications the individual self will be eligible and fit to receive divine grace. His ideas can be briefly stated as follows:

There are innumerable infinite selves in this universe. The experiences of these infinite selves are different from one another. Their powers are limited by the five Kanchukas or sheaths and further conditioned by Puryashaka (subtle body consisting of five Tanmatras and Antahkarana) and further

subject to the merits and demerits of their actions coupled with residual traces (Samkaras) of past actions. The theodicy or cast of disposition of consciousness thus formulated inspires and influences the finite self in the inner and outer activities of his life. With this background or underlying influence the individual self who is instructed by teachers with the knowledge of the sacred scriptures gets an awakening for obtaining spiritual knowledge and thereafter aspires for release from bondage. Even this kind of awakening and aspiration for redemption or release from bondage is due to the grace of God. It is our common experience that all people with equal positions in life, intellectual attainments and living in the same environment will not evince the same desire for the highest end or supreme value in life, Moksha. This leads us to infer that God's grace has not been bestowed upon them.

The seers have enumerated the various degrees of redemptive grace that will be conferred upon the aspirant, Sadhaka. If the individual self is fully qualified by fruits of meritorious deeds, Karmasparipaka, the redemptive grace of God will immediately release him from bondage. This is called Tivrasakti Pata. Such exalted selves who are fit to receive the divine grace do not require any psychological practices, rituals, initiation etc. Those who are less qualified will be fit to receive Madhyama-sakti Pata of the Supreme Being. This kind of divine grace induces them or directs them to psychological practices, austerties, rituals, initiation, etc. This class of beings gradually practising the course prescribed above will be liberated in due course. The third class of beings, are those who receive Mandasakti Pata from the Supreme Being. This kind of grace will create in the individual self a longing for philosophical and spiritual knowledge.

and will further inspire him to meditation and concentration with a detached attitude towards terrestrial life. The nature of the spiritual evolution or transformation in the individual soul may roughly be estimated or explained in this way by the nature of the divine grace that has been showered upon him. An individual self may become fit for divine grace by following the method. He may acquire knowledge from ancient scriptures, and follow his social and ethical duties in order to lead a peaceful life in society without impairment of his spiritual evolution. The psychological practices and preceptorial instructions are prescribed exclusively for faster progression and to obtain divine grace.

The enlightened self by his philosophical knowledge identifies his own self with the universal Self (Samavesa) but only on the intellectual plane. Next he experiences the objective world which is the very expression of the universal self and feels that his being is not different from the universal Self. By this kind of spiritual practices or Yoga he sees the objective world as a manifestation of the Supreme Being and not different from him and feels in his own self that the universe is his supreme wealth.

Sarvomamayam vihhavah ityevam  
 parijanatah  
 Visvatmanovikalpopi prasarepi  
 mahaesatam.  
 (Vijnanabhatrava).

By identifying his own self with the universal Self he will be self-concentrated in all his activities (Svarupansandhana). In other words he will acquire actual insight into the true nature of things. By leading a dedicated, benevolent and detached life in this world he becomes a Karma Yogi and experiences that the objective world is the expression of the universal

Self To such individual selves the grace of God, like the showering of rain on the growing crops fruitifies his desire of union in due course with the Supreme Being or Consciousness.

### Upayas

The aim of these Upayas to get rid of the three Malas, (impurities) that obstruct the light of consciousness—Chaitanyam, i.e., Atma In order to achieve liberation or release from bondage our ancient seers have prescribed several ways and means according to the abilities of the aspirant (Sadhakas). The four important means or Upayas which are recommended are very important as they embrace the whole range of the means of Self-realization, these are Aoupaya, Samhhavopaya, Saktopaya and Anavopaya.

Aoupaya is recommended for individuals who are far advanced in their extension of consciousness. They need only a word from a responsible quarter stating that "Thou art Paramasiva". On initiation from a Guru this individual becomes capable of identifying his true nature with Paramasiva. Such individuals need not have recourse to rituals, ceremonies, psychological practices and the like. This in short is Anupaya.

Those who are advanced in spiritual knowledge and who are able to transcend intellectual and mental stages by energizing their will power are eligible for Sambhavopaya. Here also the rituals and ceremonies are not of much importance. The individual meditates on the highest Sivatattva. By meditation on the universe as being filled with Paramasiva one rises to the rank of Paramasiva the Lord of the manifested universe. For attaining this, one should constantly dwell on the thought 'The world has emanated from me the world is reflected in me and the world is not separate from me'."

Matta Evoditamidam  
Mayyaive Pratibhimhitam  
Madabhinnamidam cheti  
Tridhopayah sa samhhavah

Tantraaloka · Abnika 3 , Stoka 231.

By energizing his will-power he will identify himself with Paramasiva. To him the distinction between subject and object disappears and he reaches the bliss of Samadhi.

Saktopaya requires psychological practices and transformation of inner forces (Sarvasakti Vilolata) to direct the mental impressions from duality to unity. Saktopaya is otherwise called Mantra Sastra. By effort the Chitta attains unity with Siva beyond the Mantra—a combination of sounds. The Matruka, the body of Sakti, is like a sleeping serpent coiled round the spark of light (Biodu) concealed in its heart. The concentration of this spark overrooses her. The coiled serpent becomes straight. By continued practice the man attains Mantravirya, by which his intellectual powers and bliss increase. By proceeding further and acquiring Pratibha Jnaana or true knowledge he reaches Khechari, the state of Siva. By exercising thus his energies by conscious effort he will be able to transform his whole being—inner and outer activities. Gradually the feeling of duality becomes thinner and thinner and finally merges in pure Consciousness or Chit or Parasamvit.

The last one is Anavopaya. Anu means the finite self. In this Upaya by external worship of God physical exercises, psychological practices—particularly concentration and meditation—the individual self utilizes the instruments of the lower order (Karana) which were means of his bondage and turns them as a means for his complete transformation leading to Self-realization. By following this Upaya the individual will be able to see the world

with a higher vision and will get the Samavesa of the supreme Coconsciousness. He feels the objective universe as non-different from the Supreme Being and identifies himself with the Supreme Being. He is capable of realizing such Samavesa even in the terrestrial world by realizing the essential unity between subject and object. Ordinary people with their intellectual attainments will think and feel that the objective world is different from them but those who have experienced Samavesa will realize the essential unity in diversity.

Thus we see that Kashmir Saivism embraces the salient features of the philosophies of India. We find here the psychological practices of Yoga, Akhyati of the Mimamsakas, i.e., voluntary limitation of one's own powers, moevism of the Upani-

shads, pragmatism and realism of Nyaya-Vaisesika and the twenty-five categories of Sankhya. We find the implications of qualified monism, admitting the attributes of the Supreme Being. Finally admitting absolute Reality in the subjective and objective creation of this endless universe it reconciles the opposition between being and becoming and the one and the many. The aspirant who wants to acquire and assimilate perfect knowledge and wisdom has vast choice in this system in selecting or electing the practices according to his own temperament and abilities. Further there is vast scope for self-analysis, for differentiating his experiences and for verifying his states and stages of coconsciousness by comparing his scriptural knowledge with his own finer experiences.\*

## Practice of Yoga ACCORDING TO BHAGAVAD GITA

Sri Swami Sivacanda

With the self unattached to external contacts, one finds happiness in the inner Self; with the self engaged in meditation on the inner Self, one attains infinite happiness.

The enjoyments that are born of contacts are only parents of pain; for, they have a beginning and an end; the wise do not rejoice in them.

He who is able while still here (in this world) to withstand the impulses born out of desire and anger,—he indeed is a Yogi; he is a happy man.

He who is happy within, who rejoices within, who is illuminated within—that Yogi attains absolute freedom (Moksha) in

Brahman (the infinite Consciousness), himself becoming a part of that infinite Consciousness.

Sages obtain this absolute freedom, whose sins have been destroyed, whose sense of duality and doubt is torn asunder, who are self-controlled, and who are intent on the good of all beings.

Shutting out (the impact of) all external contact and fixing the gaze (attention) between the eye-brows, (i.e., to pure Intelligence or in the universality of the Self), regulating the outgoing and the incoming breaths, with the senses, the mind and the intellect (ever) controlled, having Moksha as the supreme goal, devoid of desire, fear

\* A Paper read before the Mythic Society on 28-4-1954, based on the introduction of the author's translation of Pratyabhijna Hridaya by Khemareja in Kannada.

## HINDUISM



Lord Siva who occupies a most important position in the Hindu Pantheon and is worshipped by millions of devotees His myriads of temples dot the vast Indian subcontinent



Islam does not allow image worship. Countless mosques all over the world however symbolize the religion of Mohammed Sri Sivamandali Maharaj is seen outside a mosque

## ISLAM

CHRISTIANITY



*His Holiness the Pope Pius VII chief representative and  
spiritual leader of the Roman Catholics*

and anger,—such an aspirant is indeed fit for attaining the Absolute.

When one is not attached to sense-objects or to actions (performed by him or by others, having renounced all self-created desires,—then one is said to have attained to Yoga.

One should lift oneself by the Self; one should not lower oneself; for the Self alone is the friend of oneself, and the (lower) self alone is the enemy of oneself.

The absolute Self is the principle of constant realization to him who has balance of mind in cold and heat, pleasure and pain, as also in honour and dishonour.

Serene-minded, fearless, firmly grounded in the vow of celibacy and purity, having restrained the senses, one should meditate on the Lord.

Thus always keeping the mind steadfast in Yoga, the Yogi, with his mind quiescent, attains to perennial peace, which culminates in Nirvana.

When the perfectly controlled mind rests in the Self alone, free from the longing for all objects of desire, then it is said, 'one is united' (i.e., one is in the state of Yoga). Having attained this union one thinks of no other gain as superior to it, and wherein established, one is not moved even by heavy sorrow.

The Yoga should be practised with determination and with undesponding

mind, abandoning all desires born of self-willed imagination, and completely restraining the sense-impulses by the higher mind.

Little by little one should attain quiescence by the intellect held in firmness, and once having established the mind in the Self, one should not think of anything else.

With the mind harmonised by Yoga, one sees the Self abiding in all beings, and all beings in the Self; thus, one who sees the Reality everywhere, and sees everything in the Reality, never becomes separated from that Reality.

He who, having realized the homogeneous nature of the Self, perceives equality in beings, in everything everywhere, is regarded as the highest Yogi.

Endowed with pure intellect, having controlled the self by firmness, relinquishing the objects of desire, abandoning attachment and bated dwelling in solitude, eating but little, with speech, body and mind under restraint, always engaged in the Yoga of meditation, taking refuge in dispassion, having annihilated egotism, arrogance, longing for worldly objects, having eschewed anger, covetousness and selfishness—and ever peaceful,—such a courageous hero is indeed fit for attaining the Absolute.

### GOD

God is the one who created you, then provides for you, then makes you die, and gives you life again (30, 40). It is God who created you from weakness, then after weakness arranged strength, then after strength gave weakness and gray hair, creating what He would (30, 54). And it is He who has made ears and eyes and minds for you,—small thanks you give! And it is He who has spread you abroad in the world, and you shall be gathered back to Him. And it is He who gives life and death, and His the alteration of the night and day (23, 78-80) .....Lord of the heavens and the earth and all that is between, there is no God but He!

—The Koran.

# Yoga and the Six Schools of Hindu Philosophy

Yogiraj Sri Edward Hain, M.A.

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It will help us in our understanding of Yoga to know what place it takes in the six traditional schools of Hindu philosophy.

There is also need for some light to be thrown on the relationship of these six so-called schools to each other since the very use of the word 'schools' has suggested to a number of people in the past that there is something contradictory between them. So we find that, just as different world religions have gradually evolved into a state where their respective followers vie with each other as to which is the authoritative purveyor of truth, instead of perceiving that each is merely a different way of approaching a single universal Truth, so have certain representatives of the different schools of Hindu philosophy concurred that they alone understood the Truth and that it somehow heaved them to demonstrate that the other schools were wrong. The fact is that the six schools are not basically contradictory at all but are merely six different ways of approaching the One Reality which underlies them all. All can claim the authority of the Upanishads, and the validity of these claims is a further proof of their underlying unity.

Much of the prevalent confusion can be avoided if these six schools of Hindu philosophy are considered in the correct order, for then they are seen, to be one by one, a development of each other and simply to represent different stages on a universal Path. Theretore we shall consider the six schools in the following order:

- 1 Vaisesika
- 2 Nyaya
- 3 Samkhya
- 4 Yoga
- 5 Mimamsa

## 6 Vedanta

Considering them in this order a harmonious picture unfolds itself as follows:

### Vaisesika

The Vaisesika philosophy states that there is One Underlying Reality.

This One Reality however is seen differently through different objects. This is because each different object has its own special properties. The Vaisesika philosophy then proceeds to analyze the special properties of all the different objects in the universe and so we find that it includes a detailed study of physics, chemistry, and other sciences. This philosophy therefore starts its search for the One Reality with the analysis of physical objects that one can touch and see.

### Nyaya

The Nyaya philosophy states that there is One Underlying Reality. It maintains that one can arrive at the One Reality by using the intellect which, by employing both deductive and inductive methods, can proceed by logic from grosser levels to subtler levels of existence and can realize the Underlying Reality by this method. The Nyaya philosophy therefore is distinguished by the comprehensive system of logic which it has evolved.

### Samkhya

The Samkhya philosophy states that there is One Underlying Reality. Like the Nyaya philosophy it believes that the One Reality can be approached through the mind. It then asks the question 'Who is it that rules the individual mind?' From this it proceeds to the study of the Jiva or the individual soul together with the Jiva's servants namely body, mind and senses. The Samkhya philosophy holds that these

servants are useful instruments to discovering the One Reality through study of the whole universe with the Jivas using its servants to this end. So the Samkhya philosophy seeks to come to the One Reality through the use of body, mind and senses by the individual soul who is held to rule these.

### **Yoga**

The Yoga philosophy states that there is One Underlying Reality. Like the Samkhya philosophy it takes note of the manifestations of the Jiva and of the Jiva's servants. However, Yoga regards these servants not as helps in discovering the One Reality but as hindrances. Yoga therefore seeks to make these servants inactive, so that there is then no obstacle to prevent the revelation of the Purusha or Universal Soul or Oversoul as the sole manifestation of the One Reality. Yoga maintains that when the Purusha is seen thus, each Jiva or individual soul is seen to be freed from the universe and to be itself not separate from the Purusha. In other words the Jiva and its servants are only appearances and not ultimately real.

### **Mimamsa**

The Mimamsa philosophy states that there is One Underlying Reality. It postulates that this Reality manifests itself in many Divine Forms and that the individual can come to realization of the One Reality through the right kind of approach and devotion to these Divine Beings. The Mimamsa philosophy therefore deals with different gods, their functions and what they symbolize, and prescribes various Kriyas (duties), Mantras (affirmations), rituals etc., for proper devotion to these gods. There are particular formulas to be followed for each particular god, and while the individual may choose the particular manifestation of the Divine which he wishes to follow he should observe the

correct formulas if he is to be successful in winning the grace of his chosen Deity and coming to realization of the One Reality through this grace.

### **Vedanta**

The Vedanta philosophy states that there is One Undeveloping Reality. Virtually this is all that Vedanta does state. It transcends all the foregoing philosophies in that it recognizes only the One and sees nothing else. True Vedanta is therefore known as "Advaita" meaning 'non-dual.' However, since the attainment of such a state—in which there is only the One—is practically an impossibility, there have evolved two further schools of Vedanta known respectively as the "Dvaita," which states that there is the duality of God on the one hand and the World on the other, and what is known as the "Visishtadvaita" ("qualified non-dual") which is between the pure Dvaita and the pure Advaita and makes to effect the following proposition "All is One but within the One each Jiva recognizes both its unity and its separateness." The last named form of Vedanta is probably that which is most widely adhered to by those who call themselves Vedantists. The Vedants is without doubt the highest philosophy but being unattainable by the majority has been made available in the dual and the qualified non-dual versions.

### **No Basic Contradiction**

I repeat that there is no basic contradiction between these six schools. They all recognize that there is but One Underlying Reality. In considering Yoga we are therefore considering but one of the six traditionally recognized methods of approach to this One Reality. All the different methods are equally valid and you may choose the one which suits you the best. Yoga is essentially a method of mind-control and seeks by its practice to put the mind and

Iodriyas (that is, the five senses and the five organs of action) out of action so as to come to a direct intuitive perception of the One Reality. It is probably true to say that within these six schools of philosophy, although we call them Hindu and although they are Indian in origin, one comprised all the philosophies that the world has ever seen to the eternal search for the One Underlying Truth.

#### Secret of Full Living

We are now in a better position to understand Yogi himself in relation to our everyday life. Yoga holds the key to the secret of Full Living. The Yogi is not striving to live in any particular way, he just lives with no over-lowering awroooss of joy and contentment. This joy and Contentment comes from Pure Life itself. Yoga develops the intuitive faculty in man and prepares the way for this by certain practices whose aim is to put out of action the relatively crude instruments of knowledge we normally use namely the mind and the senses just as, if we wish to tune in on the radio to one particular wavelength we have to put all other wavelengths out of action. This is not to say that the mind and senses cease to be used in the course of living. Yoga is essentially a practical science and the eventual effect of sincere practice is to increase the efficacy of mind and senses as the instruments of man. Only then man feels that they are not his instruments, but that the whole of himself including the mind and senses is the instrument of Life itself. This is how, in actual practice, the Samkhya and Yoga philosophies become united.

The mind etc., are useful instruments, as Samkhya states, but to the Yogi they are not the instruments of the individual Jiva but the instruments of Purusha or God. The means by which the Yogi arrives at this attitude involve the putting-out-of-action of these instruments as his instruments. He then comes to a state of intuitive consciousness in which he realizes basic unity with God or the Life Principle. The instruments can then come back into action as the instruments of this Life Principle. Whether you regard it as Personal or impersonal will depend on your temperament. If as personal you will probably proceed to Mimamsa or devotion (Bhakti), which can be expressed through Christianity or any of the great devotional religions. If you regard the Highest Truth as impersonal, you will probably become a Vedantin, which is expressible through most forms of Monist Philosophy. Hinduism is such a wonderfully universal religion in that it provides something for every kind of temperament.

Yoga, then, does not make one less active in the world. What it does do is to change one's attitude towards the activity. Through Viveka (discrimination of the Real from the unreal or transitory) one comes to Vairagya (non attachment to the unreal). Then as 'Vivekachudamani' tells us, one comes to that state where the real Self spontaneously manifests its true nature both within and without. This is Samadhi or Highest Bliss. May all attain this through understanding and practice of Yoga!

Hatred ever kills. Love never dies. Such is the vast difference between the two. What is obtained by love is retained for all time. What is obtained by hatred proves a burden in reality, for it increases hatred. The duty of a human being is to diminish hatred and to promote love.

—M K Gandhi

# Why Hinduism Has Triumphed Over Time

Dr. Sarvepally Radhakrishnan

Indian culture is not racially exclusive, but has affected men of all races. It is international in feeling and intention. As the typical religion of India, Hinduism represents this spirit—the spirit that has such extraordinary vitality as to survive political and social changes. From the beginning of recorded history, Hinduism has borne witness to the sacred flame of spirit which must remain for ever, even while dynasties crash and empiresumble into ruins. Hinduism alone can give our civilization a soul, and men and women a principle to live by.

Hinduism developed an attitude of comprehensive charity instead of a fanatic faith in an inflexible creed. It accepted the multiplicity of aboriginal gods and others which originated—most of them—outside the Aryan tradition and justified them all. It brought together into one whole all believers in God. Many sects professing many different beliefs live within the Hindu fold. Heresy-hunting, the favourite game of many religions is singularly absent from Hinduism.

Here and there outbreaks of sectarian fanaticism are found recorded in the literature of the Hindus, which indicate the first effects of the conflicts of the different groups brought together into the one fold, but the main note of Hinduism is one of respect and good will for other creeds.

## Tolerant

Tolerance is the homage which the finite mind pays to the inexhaustibility of the Infinite. As a result of this tolerant attitude, Hinduism itself has become a mosaic of almost all the types and stages of religious aspiration and endeavour. It has adapted itself with infinite grace to every human need and it has not shrank

from the acceptance of every aspect of God conceived by man, and yet preserved the unity by interpreting the different hisforcal forms as modes, emanations, or aspects of the Supreme.

Hinduism requires every man to think steadily on life's mystery until he reaches the highest revelation. While the lesser forms are tolerated in the interests of those who cannot suddenly transcend them, there is also through an insistence on the larger idea and the purer mode of worship.

Hinduism does not believe in forcing up the pace of development. When we give our higher experiences to those who cannot understand them, we are in the position of those who can see and who impart the visual impressions to those born blind. Unless we open their spiritual eyes they cannot see what the sees relate. So while Hinduism does not interfere with one's natural way of thinking, which depends on his moral and intellectual gifts, education and environment, it furthers his spiritual growth by lending a sympathetic and helping hand wherever he stands.

While Hinduism hates the compulsory conscription of men into the house of truth, it insists on the development of one's intellectual conscience and sensibility to truth.

## Tradition

From the beginning of history India has adored and idealized, not soldiers and statesmen, not men of science and leaders of industry, not even poets and philosophers, who influence the world by their deeds or by their words but those rarer and more chastened spirits, whose greatness lies in what they are and not in what they do. India has adored men who have stamped infinity on the thought and life of

the country, men who have added to the invisible forces of goodness in the world. To a world given over to the pursuit of power and pleasure, wealth and glory, they declare the reality of the unseen world and extend to us the call of the spiritual life. Their self-possession and self-command, their strange, deep wisdom, their exquisite courtesy and their humility proclaim that the destiny of man is to know himself and thereby forth the universal life of which he is so integral element.

### Hidden Flame

The contemplative thinkers who transmit to their generation the delicacy of old forms, reverence for the past, the breath of history, the power to feel and understand the secure and the self-contained, as well as the visions of new things and visages of a transformed age, men who know how to look upon tradition as something fluid and mobile, constantly modified and changed by the demands of life, are not among those who belong to the priestly profession today.

We are considered Hindus simply because of the legal framework of life and the individual feeling of security within which we live and have our being. Many of us have not the slightest idea of the true nature of religion, that hidden flame, which is more active among the young whose minds are in ferment.

We can hear the call and the challenge of the youth for a new emphasis in religion, a new mankind. It is the spirit of youth it can never entirely despair of human nature. It will debase itself rather than cease to believe in its dream-visions. It is convinced that the affliction that is visited on us is the return for our common failure.

### Dynamic Faith

The triumphs of this method of religious reform have been striking: no less so are

its failures. Reform by consent is slower than reform by compulsion to religions or politics, but it has the human touch. Life is a school of patience and 'charity suffereth long.' As extensive application of the principle of liberty, equality and fraternity has made Hinduism the most elastic of all religions, the most capable of adapting itself to new conditions. It is less dependent on historical facts, is freer from authority. Its gods form no exclusive group. Its pantheon has stood wide open for the admission of new deities who are always visualized as aspects of the supreme Godhead. The danger of the Hindu attitude is that what may be accepted is because it has been said so, and progress may be infinitely delayed.

Religion expresses itself in and discloses its quality by the morality which it demands. Though there is a good deal in Hindu religion which merits just criticism so far as its dark aspects of brutality, cruelty, violence, ignorance of caste, superstition and fear are concerned, to its essence, the religion seems to me to be quite fine and sound. Its followers are carried along by a longing for the vision of God which has brought some of them to the verge of a holy perfection in which the perplexing dichotomy between the flesh and the spirit, which men for ever feel but never understand to overcome.

Hindu culture is directed towards that which is transcendent and beyond. Its great achievements in times past were due to a high tension of the spirit to which our age has no parallel.

### Need for Change

One of the arguments of the conservatives is that truth is not affected by time. It cannot be superseded any more than the beauty of the sunset or a mother's love for a child. Truth may be immutability, but the form in which it is embodied consists of

elements which admit of change. We may take our spirit from the past; for the germinal idas are yet vital; but the body and the pulse must be from the present.

It is forgotten that religion, as it is today, is itself the product of ages of change; and there is no reason why its forms should not undergo fresh changes so long as the spirit demands it. It is possible to remain faithful to the latter and yet pervert the whole spirit. If the Hindu leaders of two thousand years ago, who had less learning and more light, could come on earth again after all these centuries, they would seldom find their true followers among those who have never deviated from the most literal interpretation of their views.

Today a great mass of accretions have accumulated which are choking up the stream and the free life of spirit. To say that the dead forms, which have no vital truth to support them, are too ancient and venerable to be tampered with, only prolongs the suffering of the patient who is ailing from the poison generated by the putrid waste of the past. The conservative mind must open itself to the necessity of

change. Since it is not sufficiently alive to this need, we find in the realm of philosophy a strange mixture of prostrating vacuity and unphilosophical confusion.

#### Need of the Hour

The chief energies of the thick fog Indians should be thrown into the problems of how to disentangle the old faith from its temporary accretions, how to bring religion into line with the spirit of science, how to meet and interpret the claims of temperament and individuality, and how to organize the divergent influences on the basis of the ancient faith. The religious education of the nation is not undertaken on broad lines. It is not seen that the spiritual inheritance cannot be any longer the monopoly of a favoured few.

It would be indeed strange if the spirit of the Upanishads, the Gita and the Dialogues of Buddha, that could touch the mind to such fine issues, should have lost its power over man. If, before it is too late, there is a reorganization of national life, we have bright prospects for the future of Indian thought, and one cannot tell what flowers may yet bloom, what fruits may yet ripen on the hardy old trees.\*

#### SEED OF IMMORTALITY

The thrill in matter, the throb of life, the pulse of growth, the impulse coursing through the nerve and resulting sensations,—how diverse are these and yet how unified! How strange it is that the tremor of excitation in nervous matter should not merely be transmitted but transmuted and reflected like the image on a mirror, from a different plane of life to sensation and in affection, in thought and in emotion! Of these, which is more real the material body or the image which is independent of it? Which of these is undecaying, and which of these is beyond the reach of death? Not in matter, but in thought not in possessions, or even in attainments, but in ideals are to be found the seed of immortality. Not through material acquisition but in generous diffusion of ideas and idas, can the true empire of humanity be established.

—Sir J. C. Bas-

\* Extracts from an address reported in "The Leader" in 1954

**Chapter Five**  
**B U D D H I S M**

# Sayings of the Buddha

From the 'Dhammapada'

They who imagine truth in untruth and see untruth in truth never arrive at truth, but follow vain desires. They who know truth in truth and untruth in untruth arrive at truth, and follow true desires.

Restraint in the eye is good, good is restraint in the ear, in the nose restraint is good, good is restraint in the tongue, in the body restraint is good, good is restraint in speech, in thought restraint is good, good is restraint in all things.

Victory breeds hatred, for the conquered is ill at ease. The tranquil live well at ease, careless of victory and defeat.

Lay aside past, future, and present. Wholly freed in mind thou shalt not again return to birth and old age.

Let a man leave anger, let him forsake pride, let him overcome all bondage! No sufferings befall the man who is not attached to name and form and who calls nothing his own.

Hurt not thy word or deed, be consistent in well doing, be moderate in food, dwell in solitude, and give yourself to meditation—this is the advice of Buddhas.

If anything is to be done let a man do it. A careless pilgrim only scatters the dust of his passions more widely.

Even an evil doer sees happiness as long as his evil deed has not ripened, but when his evil deed has ripened, then does he see evil. Even a good man sees evil

days as long as his good deed has not ripened, but when his good deed has ripened then does he see happy days.

As some bright flower fragrant as it is fair, are fair words whose fruit is seen in action.

Fools follow after vanity. The wise man keeps earnestness as his best jewel.

Let no man ever look for what is pleasant nor what is unpleasant. Not to see what is pleasant is pain, and it is pain to see what is unpleasant. Let no man love anything loss of the beloved is evil. Those who love nothing and hate nothing, have no fetters.

How is there laughter? How is there joy? While the fire of passion and hatred and ignorance is always burning, ye surrounded by darkness, why seek ye not the light?

By oneself the evil is done by oneself one suffers by oneself the evil is left undone by oneself one is purified. Purity and impurity belong to oneself, no one can purify another.

Let us live happily, not hating those who hate us. Let us live happily, free from afflictions among men who are sick at heart. Let us live happily, free from care among the busy. Let us dwell happily free from yearning among men who are anxious. Let us live happily then though we cast nothing our own."

When you do a thing because you have determined that it ought to be done, never avoid being seen doing it, even if the opinion of the multitude is going to condemn you. For, if your action is wrong, then avoid doing it altogether, but if it is right why do you fear those who will rebuke you?

—I p. 12 e

# Words of Wisdom from the Buddhist Literature

Sri Swami Sivananda

1 Abandon what is before, what is behind, what is in the middle when thou goest to the other shore of existence. If thy mind is perfectly free, then will not again enter into birth and old age.

2 Him I call indeed a Brahmana who has cut all fetters, who thirsts not for pleasure, who is independent and unshackled.

3 Hurt no one by word or deed, live restrained under the law, be moderate in eating, dwell in solitude, practise meditation—this is the teaching of Buddha to the awakened.

4 Not nakedness, not matted hair, not dirt, not fesing or lying on the earth, not abhuting with dust, not sitting motionless, can purify a mortal who has not destroyed cravings and desires.

5 Earnestness is the path of immortality, thoughtlessness is the path that leads to death. Those who are earnest do not die, those who are thoughtless are as if dead, already.

6 The gift of the law (Dhamma) exceeds all gifts the sweetness of the law exceeds all delight, the extinction of thirst overcomes all griefs and pains.

7. If anything is to be done, let a man do it, let him attack it vigorously. A care less pilgrim only scatters the dust of his passions more widely.

8 Such a one who does his duty in tolerance like the earth, like Indra's bolt, he is like a jake without mud, no new births are in store for him.

9 A man is not an 'elder' because his hairs are grey. Mere old age is called empty old age. He is called elder in

whom dwell truth, virtue, love, harmlessness, self-control, moderation, who is free from impurity and is wise.

10 He who offends a harmless, pure and innocent person, the evil returns upon him as fine dust thrown against the wind.

11 Let no man think lightly of evil, saying in his heart, it will not come near unto me. Even by the lapping of water-drops a water pot is filled, the fool he comes full of evil, even if he gathers it little by little.

12 The perfume of virtue is more excellent than the scent of Sandal, Jassa mine and Litzy Meagre is the scent that comes from Sandal and Jassamles. The perfume of those who are endowed with virtue rises up in the highest Heavens.

13 Victory breeds hatred, because the conqueror is unhappy. He who has given up both victory and defeat, the contented is happy.

14 Never does hatred cease by hating, hatred ceases by love.

15 Better than kingship over the earth, better than dwelling in heaven, better than Lordship over all worlds, is the reward of the first step in holiness or saintliness.

16 Even the gods envy those who are awakened, who practise meditation who are wise and who take delight in seclusion and renunciation.

17 The taint of the body is laziness, the taint of the watchman is negligence, the taint of a woman is unchastity, the taint of a donor is misertious. But there is a taint worse than all these taints—that is, ignorance the greatest taint! O Men! Throw off this taint and become taintless.

# Buddhism

Sri Swami Sivananda

'Om Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato  
Samma-Sambuddhass'

'Hoccur to the Blessed One, the Holy  
one, all-wise !

Buddham Saranam Gacchami:  
Dharmam Sarasam Gacchami:  
Saoham Sarasam Gacchami:  
To the Buddha for Refuge I go.  
To the Teaching for Refuge I go  
To the Order for Refuge I go.

## Introduction

**Birth.** Buddha was born on the borders of Nepal about 620 B.C. and died about 543 B.C. at Kusinagara in Oudh.

**Daily life.** Buddha spent his whole day in the following manner. He would rise early and take his bath. Then he would go to a solitary place for the practice of contemplation. Then he would take the beggar's bowl and would go to the nearest town or village for alms. Sometimes he would go alone, while at other times with his disciples. Sometimes flowers would rain down upon him from the sky. Sometimes flowers would spring up in his footsteps when he passed. Mother Earth paid homage to Buddha. Sometimes the birds and beasts would welcome him with gentle sounds. Sometimes celestial music would be heard about him. A bale of six colours was sometimes seen shining about him where he stood at the door of the houses for alms.

When the meal was over, he would call the people and speak to them on higher divine matters and the way of leading the divine life. Then he would talk to the disciples and remove their difficulties in their path and meditation. He would rest for a while during the heat of the day. He would get up and do good services to the

people under the circumstances. Then he would give discourses in the evening. Afterwards he would speak to the Bhikshus for some time, clear their doubts and inspire them. He would rest for part of the night and would spend the other part of the night in meditation. When the day began to dawn, he would think of the means by which he could help the people to realize their hopes and aspirations.

Buddha abandoned his kingdom and went about begging his bread through the streets of India and preached for the good of men and animals. He had a heart as wide as the sky or the ocean. He did not want heaven. He did not want money or throne. What an exalted selfless Yogi he was! He was the only man who was ever ready to give up his life for animals to stop a sacrifice. He once said to a king "If the sacrifice of a lamb helps you to go to heaven, sacrificing a man will help you better. Therefore sacrifice me". He has left an indelible impression on this world by his extraordinary sacrifice, great renunciation and purity of life.

## What is Buddhism?

Buddhism is the religion of analysis. It is the religion of earnest, undaunted effort. Buddhism was founded by Gautama Saky Muni, the rebel child of Hinduism. It sprang up directly from Hinduism. Buddha never thought of founding a new religion. He made no new discovery. He was proclaiming only the ancient and pure form of religion which had prevailed among the Hindus.

The pure and noble religion of the Vedas and the Upanishads had degenerated into dead forms, unmeaning rites and ceremonies. The Brahmins claimed honour

merely by their birth. They neglected the study of the Vedas and the practice of virtue. The Brahmins were treated with undue severity and the Sudras with undue severity. In order that flesh-eating may have the sanction of religion, animals were slaughtered and sacrificed in Yagnas. Such was the state of Society at the time when Buddha appeared. His tender and loving heart could not bear the shedding of so much innocent blood in the sacred name of religion.

#### Great Reformer

Buddha came to the world to show the path of righteousness, to destroy the path of error and to break down sorrow. Buddhism is not agnosticism or atheism. Buddhism does not preach pessimism. It preaches wonderful optimism. Buddhism is not nihilism. Buddha did not deny God. He only said "Do not bother about questions like 'Is there God? Do I exist? Is the world real or not?' Do not waste your time and energy in useless discussions. Become a practical religious man. Purify your heart. Control the mind. Lead a virtuous life. You will attain Nirvana or emancipation or eternal bliss."

Buddha declared that merit and merit only determined the position of a man in Society. The persecuted Sudras joined him in large numbers. He directed his energy and time to removing the distinction of caste and stopping all sacrifices in which animals were slaughtered. If Buddha had been born in a period when these evils did not exist he would have made little impressions. There would have been no accession for his reform. But as he lived in a period in which the above two evils existed, he naturally attracted a large number of followers and unconsciously became the founder of a new Faith.

#### Itinerant Monk

Buddha spent 50 years in passing from

place to place in India, teaching and preaching and gathering round him a great number of disciples. He preached his first sermon at Isipata, the Deer Park, Benares, now Sarnath. He spoke of the four noble Truths; sorrow, cause of sorrow, removal of sorrow and the way for removal of sorrow. In the first three months of his teaching at Benares, he drew around him a band of sixty, who formed the nucleus of the order of the orange-yellow robe. Buddha said to them "Wander, O Ye Bhikshus. Preach the Dhamma to all. Proclaim the doctrine of Noble Eightfold path for the welfare and happiness of men. Let not two of you go in one direction."

#### Ahimsa and Love

Religious persecution is unknown to Buddhism. Not a single drop of blood has ever been shed in the name of Buddhism. At the present day it is estimated that more than one-third of the population of the world is Buddhist. Buddhism spread by the spirit of strong grace. History of Buddhism does not relate any great wars as having been waged or countries vanquished in its name. It has always adopted peaceful ways of disseminating its teachings. Tolerance and serenity characterize the Buddhistic faith.

Many Rishis and Prophets have preached the doctrine of love and Ahimsa but there has never been in the entire history of the world a ethical thought a greater affirmation of the principle of Ahimsa and Love than has been done by Lord Buddha. No one has disseminated so widely the doctrine of Ahimsa and Universal love as Lord Buddha. No one has practised these two fundamental virtues of love and Ahimsa as Buddha. No one has possessed such a tender, kind and merciful heart as Buddha. Hence he is enshrined even now in the hearts of millions of people. His heart throbbed severely and melted when he

saw a little suffering in an ant or a worm or a dog. He gave up his body as food for a hungry ferocious animal in his previous birth. Several acts of kindness done in several births made him a Buddha in his last birth.

#### Bequevolent Humanitarian

Buddha was the greatest benevolent man or humanitarian which the world has ever produced. He is one without a second. Benevolence and humanitaranism are the key-notes of all religious movements of the world. But the benevolence and humanitarism spirit and work of Lord Buddha stand unrivalled in the religious history of the world. His is the noblest and grandest humanism that has ever existed. The great invulnerable edifice of humanitarianism built by Lord Buddha on the rock-foundation of Ahimsa and cosmic love is indeed his crowning glory.

Twenty five centuries have elapsed since Lord Buddha was born in this country and yet the truth of his great message is felt even more today than if was, during his life time. In Buddhism we have religion, philosophy, ethics and psychology, all combined into one comprehensive system of thought with the direct and practical purpose of meeting the deepest needs and aspirations of human nature—a philosophy applicable to every aspect of our complicated individual and social life.

Buddha did not erect any monuments or temples. He did not conquer any country. He did not subjugate any people. But he had erected a magnificent, permanent temple in the hearts of men. He made conquest over the souls of men. He made cultural conquest. Therefore he still lives in the hearts of hundreds of millions of men.

The doctrine of Ahimsa was preached by Lord Rishabha the first Tirthankar of the Jains. The essential principle which Lord

Buddha, the Prince of Peace inculcated was also the principle of Ahimsa (non-violence) and Maitri (Love). The cardinal principle of his ethical teaching is universal love. On this is built the magnificent edifice of humanism which is his crowning glory.

Lord Buddha had a wonderful personality. He refuted the authority of the Vedas, vehemently opposed the caste-system and preached universal brotherhood and upheld the doctrine of Ahimsa. As Buddhism preached Anitya and Anatma Vada it was considered antagonistic to Hinduism. Hence Sri Sankara and his followers blotted it out of India.

#### Self Reliance

Lord Buddha did not rest his teachings on any authority of books or any special revelation granted unto him, but on truths which he discovered by his own self-searching and transcendental experiences. He proclaimed that the experience was open to only those who trod the path of virtue, piety and self discipline. He said to the Kelamas 'Accept not what you hear by report, accept not tradition because it is old and has been handed down through many generations do not hasty conclude that it must be so do not accept state meet on the ground that it is found in our books nor on the supposition that this is acceptable, nor because it is the saying of your teacher or priests. Whatsoever according to your own experience and after thorough investigation agrees with your reason and is conducive to your welfare as well as to other living beings that accept as true mould of your life in accordance with that.'

This is the view of free thinkers and rationalists also but this will not help the aspirants to attain the goal. Intellect is finite. It has its own limitations. The Upanishads boldly declare that one can attain Self realization through the help of a

wonderful teacher, a Brahmasroori and a Brahmanishta who has theoretical knowledge of the scriptures, and who has direct knowledge of the Ultimate Truth or Brahman also.

To accuse Buddha as an atheist or agnostic is simply foolish. Buddha found no use in metaphysical wrangling. He declined to enter into metaphysics. Is there God or no God? Is life eternal or non-eternal? These questions were set aside as not requiring an answer for the attainment of Nirvana. The immediate great problem for Buddha was suffering and annihilation of suffering. He asked his followers not to bother about these transcendental questions. He set aside all those things which did not help towards the attainment of the goal. He thought it wise to give his followers a way and not a creed. He thought that speculation about the nature of Ultimate Reality was an unnecessary drag on the path of Truth and spiritual attainment. The next vital and fundamental thing is not to discuss about the Ultimate Truth, but to tread the path which takes man out of the world of pain and suffering into the Supreme abode of eternal bliss and immortality. The nature of Ultimate Truth is beyond the reach of mind and speech. If Buddha refused to define the nature of the Absolute or if he contented himself with negative definitions, it is only to show that the Absolute or the Ultimacy is above all definitions.

Buddha demands from you faith in your own Self in your own latent forces. Without this faith nothing can be achieved. He says "Be a light unto yourself, be a refuge unto yourself. There is no external refuge. All component things are impermanent. Work out your salvation in earnestness." The first words of Buddha after his enlightenment were "Wide open are the gates of immortality. Ye that have ears to hear, release your faith."

Buddha did not want his followers to believe in his words, but to understand them and take them for starting their own investigations and experience.

### Doctrines and Teachings

The gospel of Buddha is simple and yet wonderfully profound. Buddha analyzed all experiences and the world process as it appears to all of us with a scientific frame of mind. He finds out that everything is mutable, changing, impermanent or transitory. It is the exceeding rapidity of continuous succession that gives us the idea of an enduring entity, just as a burning stick rapidly whirled round gives us the idea of a really existing circle of fire (Alata-chakra). So in this whirlpool of empirical existence, there is nothing abiding or immutable. Man also shares the same fate. His body decays and perishes. The body of a man is a psycho-physical composite of five great groups, viz., Roopa Skandha or body, Vedana Skandha or feeling, Samjna Skandha or perception, Samskar Skandha or dispositions or tendencies and Vijñana Skandha or thought. There are suffering, disharmony, discord and discontent everywhere in life on account of impermanence or transitoriness of things around. This universal experience of sorrow or Dukkha is the starting point in Buddha's thought. Buddha did not preach pessimism. He was wonderfully optimistic. He emphatically asserts that there is a way out of sorrow and a heaven of eternal bliss within the reach of every man.

The first proclamation of his teachings was addressed to his former companions, five ascetics, who had lost their confidence in him. Buddha said to them: "Open your ears, O monks! the deliverance from death is found."

The four cardinal truths or principles which Buddha preached are (1) That there-

is suffering (Dukkha) in the world, (2) that the cause of suffering is Tanha or craving, (Dukkha Samudaya) (3) that the extinction of craving leads to cessation of suffering (Dukkha-nirodha), (4) that this extinction of craving can be achieved by the noble eightfold path (Dukkha-nirodha margā)

These truths occur repeatedly in the various books of Hinduism. The second Sutra of Nyaya philosophy of Gautama Rishi gives a description of these four truths of Buddha 'Of suffering, attachment to mundane life, action, defects and false knowledge, the extinction of one leads to the extinction of that which precedes it and the extinction of suffering is emancipation or Moksha'

The ten evils must be shunned. They are called 'Dasa-akusala'. Three pertain to the body, four to the speech and three to the mind. Not to kill, not to steal, not to do acts of sexual immorality, belong to the body. Not to utter falsehood, not to abuse, not to use harsh and vulgar words, or vain talk, belong to speech. Greed, malice, sticking to superstitious beliefs and unreasonable views, denying the Law of cause and effect, belong to the mind.

The Rules of conduct are Dana (charity) Seela Bhavana (purity of moral conduct), Veyyavacha (thinking of good things) Apachayana (service of others with courtesy and politeness) Patti-puttetu Modana (nursing the sick and elders), Damma Savana (requesting others to share with us in doing good) Damma Deasna (giving the merits of one's good actions to others) Dithilujukata (hearing and preaching the good Law)

Buddha insisted upon the inexorable Law of cause and effect. He said to the people that they lived in a world in which causes always produce their natural and necessary effects and that the consequences of their conduct would, therefore,

follow them wherever they went. He said that virtue has its own reward and vice its own punishment and that whatever is done inevitably reacts on the character and through the character affects for weal or woe the destiny of the Soul.

He who is desirous of attaining Nirvana or Buddhahood must stand on the foundation of the four Iddhipadas viz., intense yearning to attain Nirvana, cultivation of noble thought, the energy to do meritorious deeds and investigation of methods adopted and develop the five psychic organs viz., faith, power of recollection, strenuous indomitable energy, concentration of good sublime thoughts and Supreme wisdom. He must also develop the seven attributes of Supreme wisdom viz. physical attentiveness, analysis of the Skandhas, seats of consciousness, the Law of cause and effect, etc. He must destroy the latter, viz., ignorance of the Law of cause and effect and the four cardinal truths, pride, desire for sensual enjoyment in the heavens, etc. and remove the hindrances viz., desire for sexual enjoyment, hatred, anger, sleepiness, laziness, doubt, tossing of mind and restlessness. Armed with these, he must tread the eightfold noble path. Then only he will be able to attain Nirvana.

#### Eightfold Noble Path

The extinction of craving (Tanha) or Trishna (thirsting for sensual pleasures) can be achieved by the noble eightfold path i.e., the practice of—

1. Right belief, right understanding or right views,
2. Right aspiration,
3. Right speech
4. Right conduct or right action
5. Right living or right means of livelihood,
6. Right exertion,
7. Right mindfulness or attentiveness;

**S Right concentration or meditation.**  
The eightfold noble path is the absolute way to reach the goal of Nirvana in this life.

The eight steps in the path are classified under three main heads:

(1) *Vaca* or moral conduct comprises right speech (kindly, frank and truthful), right action (peaceful, honest and pure) and right living (without hurting any living being).

(2) *Samadhi* or concentration comprises right exertion, right mindfulness or attention and right meditation.

(3) *Panna* or wisdom comprises right belief, or right understanding or right views (free from superstition or delusion) and right aspirations. Buddha makes Sela or moral conduct, the stepping stone to the higher stages of meditation and wisdom.

Buddha lays great emphasis on the way of life. He avoids the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification and prescribes the Middle Way. He said in a memorable sermon "There are two extremes, O recluses, which he who has gone forth ought not to follow, the habitual practice, on the one hand, of those things whose attraction depends upon the pleasure of sense, and especially of sensuality (a practice low and pagan, fit only for the worldly-minded, unworthy, of no abiding profit), and the habitual practice, on the other hand, of self-mortification (a practice painful, unworthy, and equally of no abiding profit).

"There is a Middle way, O recluses, avoiding these two extremes, discovered by the Tathagata—a path which opens the eyes and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvana."

What is this Middle Way? It is the Noble Eightfold Path which constitutes,

so to say, the entire ethical code of Buddha. They are:

#### (1) Right Views or Right Belief

Right view is right understanding. Rejection of all uncritical convictions, superstitions and defused belief is right view or right belief or right understanding. The intellect is trained or disciplined to see things in their proper perspectives. Right understanding leads to right aspirations or the higher and purer aspirations towards renunciation, benevolence and kindness. Right knowledge of the existence of suffering, the origin thereof, its cessation and the way towards the liberation from suffering constitute right understanding.

Right views are undoubtedly essential before you can succeed in any attempt. Wrong views should be purged out. If the foundation is properly laid the superstructure becomes strong and stable. If you are free from prejudice only, you can entertain right views. Lack of right views has been the cause for religious persecution, misunderstanding and quarrels in the world.

#### (2) Right aspiration (Samma-Sankappa)

Right aspiration leads to the attainment of the *summum bonum* or Nirvana. Right aspiration consists in keeping the goal before the mind's eye and attempting to achieve Nirvana or the state of perfection where there will be an end of all sufferings, sorrows and pains. Right aspiration must be strengthened by renouncing all sensual pleasures and developing dispassion. Right aspiration is the right mental attitude, sympathy and selflessness.

#### (3) Right Speech (Samma-Vacca).

Right speech consists in uttering the truth and speaking sweet, loving words and avoiding slander, abuse, gossip or vain talking. Buddha said "—let no one

cause anyone to utter falsehood nor approve of those who speak falsely. Speech at the right moment, accomplished by argument, moderate and full of sense is like a treasure." Wrong speech is the cause for quarrels, and unhappiness in this world. It is very important for everybody to cultivate right speech. Discipline of speech is Vak Tapas.

#### (4) Right action (*Samma Kammanta*)

Right action consists in abstaining from killing, stealing, adultery or unlawful sexual intercourse and drinking liquor. Buddha laid a strong emphasis on sexual purity. The monks were advised abstinence from thinking and talking or acting sexually. Service of the poor and the sick and all acts of positive good and kindness in general, constitute right action.

#### (5) Right living (*Samma Ajita*)

Right living consists in earning one's living by fair or honest means. Foul means of livelihood must be strictly avoided. One should earn his livelihood by the sweat of his brow. Buddha asks his followers to refrain from five trades viz., trading in arms in living beings in flesh, in intoxicating drinks and in liquor. Hunting should be given up.

#### (6) Right exertion (*Samma Vayama*)

Right exertion consists in not allowing the mind to have evil thoughts, to eradicate those that have already arisen or become habitual and to cultivate good thoughts and good states of the mind and to strengthen those good thoughts which have already arisen. To abandon evil and to develop the good is right endeavour. Right exertion is a constant endeavour and self examination, self analysis and self control.

#### (7) Right mindfulness (*Samma Sati*)

Right mindfulness or right attention is to develop the quality of awareness. It consists in always remaining self possessed,

not being subject to hankering or defection or forgetfulness the consciousness is fixed on Nirvana and all sensations and perceptions are abandoned. Right attentiveness is alertness. You will have to keep your eyes wide open so that you may receive the correct impressions and profit by them and reject those which are pernicious or harmful.

#### (8) Right concentration (*Samma Samadhi*)

Right concentration or right meditation or right Samadhi is giving the mind a proper direction in the four meditations. By right Samadhi, the four illuminations are realized and Nirvana is attained in perfect consciousness. This step is also surely necessary for attaining Nirvana. This is the highest stage of development in the Buddhistic way of life through which one realizes the eternal peace of Nirvana. It is a form of mind culture which enables one to develop the latent spiritual forces in order to realize perfect knowledge.

These are the eight steps in the Way of Life presented by Lord Buddha which annihilate suffering of all kinds and lead to the attainment of Nirvana or emancipation. The cultivation and acquisition as a habitual frame of mind of these eight positive ideals constitutes Arhatship which is the Buddhist ideal of life. The noble eight fold path destroys lust anger, greed, malice and other evils and purifies the heart. Then dawns Bodhi or enlightenment which bestows perfect everlasting peace & eternal bliss and immortality.

#### The Five Commandments

The five commandments which are obligatory on all Buddhist monks as well as laymen are (1) Let not one kill any living being (2) Let not one take what is not given to him, (3) Let not one speak falsely, (4) Let not one drink intoxicating drink, (5) Let not one have unchaste sexual

intercourse These commandments correspond to the Yama or self-restraint prescribed by Patanjali Maha Rishi in his Raja Yoga Sutras

### Nirvana

What is goal of Buddhism? "Nirvana" says the Buddha The word literally means "going out" It signifies a spiritual experience full of peace and bliss, which is characterized by "the going out" in the heart of the three fires of lust ill-will and dullness" The religion of Buddha is a pathway to the Nirvanic Beatitude It is a way and not a creed It is a scheme of spiritual development and not a set of doctrines

Nirvana is not utter annihilation Nirvana is total extinction of all that is base in us

### Conclusion

The present world needs very badly the teachings of Lord Buddha Everywhere we see preparations for the destruction of the human race and its culture The fear of atomic bomb is causing restlessness everywhere. Scientists and dictators have neither rest nor peace There is mistrust amongst the leaders of the nations Malice, hatred and prejudice have grown to such a large extent that the very structure of

human civilization seems to be crumbling The one great ambition of every nation is to possess more atomic bombs Scientists are working day and night in the laboratories to release as much atomic energy as possible to destroy people What a horrible state of affairs! It is really shocking The only way by which the world can be saved is by a return to the great principles of Ahimsa and Metta inculcated by Lord Buddha and Maha Rishi Patanjali Hatred can never be cured by hatred, it can only be cured by love This is a lesson which the world has to learn again and again Take a solemn vow now to meet batred with love, and malice with goodwill This is the best way to pay our homage to the great sage Lord Buddha, the apostle of Love, Ahimsa, the Saviour of the world, Avatar of Lord Vishnu

Glory to Siddhartha son of Queen Maya and King Sudhodana the ruler of Kapila Vastu, father of Rahula husband of Yeshoda, the Prince of Peace, Gautama, the All-merciful or Lord Buddha, the Enlightened one who showed the way to attain Nirvana!

Om Namo Bhagavate'rhave Samyak  
Sambuddheya

## WAY OF YOGA

(*Sri Swami Sivananda*)

Man hates, resents, worries and fears So he is weak, sickly and miserable Man is God He is perfect He is free He knows it not If he sheds fear, anger, lust, greed, egoism he is perfect

Conquer all distractions, attachments, cravings, slowly, sternly Concentrate on the Reality This is the way of Yoga

Know thyself and you will know the world Attain Self realization This is the greatest form of service you can render in the world Realize that thou art Brahman which is beyond time and space which is supreme, changeless, eternal, infinite, all-pervading, unconditioned, indivisible and Consciousness-Bliss

# Buddha Dharma

Dr. Ooi Keng Seng

(President, World Fellowship of Buddhists, Malaya)

By Buddha Dharma we mean the great Law as taught by Gautama Buddha for the salvation of mankind. Literally however, the appellation means the Law of the Enlightened One, and Dharma means the Eternal Law.

Although the Dharma was promulgated in a systematic and scientific way about 2500 years ago by Gautama Buddha, yet the great Teacher claimed that he was merely teaching the ancient, noble Dharma (the Arya Dharma) and he also emphasized that everyone who sincerely and wholeheartedly followed the Law could attain enlightenment as he had done; for all have the same germ of wisdom within themselves.

The Buddha Dharma consists of three entities, so to speak; first the guide who is the Buddha himself, for he had trdden the path to salvation; secondly, the pilgrim, as each of us is, for we are eodeavouuring to tread the path ourselves, and thirdly, the path or the way through which the guide had attained enlightenment.

In this way we will readily see that everyone of us will have to work out our salvation ourselves, and for that purpose there are certain conditions to be fulfilled, as we would see at a later stage.

The Buddha in tackling the problems of existence discovered certain truths by his own experience heredit of any teacher or scripture.

These he called the four noble Truths which are of universal bearing. They are: (1) suffering (Duhkha), (2) the cause of suffering (Duhkha Samudaya), (3) the cessation of suffering (Duhkha Nirodha), and (4) the path which leads to the cessation of suffering (Marga).

Man's life is inevitably fraught with

suffering and fear. No one can deny this. There is a cause for this. The Buddha called it the craving for existence and ignorance (Trishna and Avijya).

The path that leads to the cessation of suffering is the middle path (Madhya Marga), which is free from the extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification. It consists of eightfold aspects, namely, (1) right understanding, (2) right mindedness, (3) right speech, (4) right action, (5) right living, (6) right effort, (7) right concentration, and (8) right meditation.

This eightfold path embodies the ethics and morality of Buddhism—all of which are universal in character and application.

Together with the eightfold path go the four radiations of Brahma Viharas which are to be assiduously practised by an aspirant to Buddhahood. They are (1) loving kindness, always and everywhere (Maitreya), (2) boundless compassion, always and everywhere (Karuna), (3) boundless joy, always and everywhere (Mudita), and (4) boundless equanimity, always and everywhere (Upaksha).

Along with these are also the five precepts (Paocha Seela), which everyone is advised to adhere to strictly. They are: (1) abstention from destroying life (2) non-envyousness, (3) chastity, (4) abstention from lying and deceiving, and (5) abstention from intoxicants.

The practice of the eightfold path and its adjuncts lead one to wisdom by which one attains the complete extinction of suffering.

The Buddha Dharma lays very great stress on what is known as the Law of Karma or in the language of science as the Law of Cause and Effect. Each man is

himself responsible for what he has been, what he is, and what he will be.

This Dharma is the way of self-culture. It recognizes no caste or creed, but lays stress on universal benevolence even to lower creatures.

It possesses the first organized monastic system in the world including even women and aspirants from all classes, castes and creeds.

It was these followers of the Buddha who went as torch-bearers of culture and Dharma to distant lands from India.

Although Buddhism has generally varied from age to age and from country to country, yet the basic principles of the Dharma have always been consistently held by all Buddhists, irrespective of country or age.

The two outstanding doctrines of the Buddha Dharma are that of compassion and wisdom which is the same as enlightenment. The first doctrine when put into practice, as testified by the earlier history of Buddhism, leads to the cessation of all strifes and hatred, individual and collective, and to an era of universal peace and happiness through practical social welfare and humanitarian services.

This aspect of the Dharma is embodied in the Avalokitesvara ideal (the Lord who looks below with compassion) of the Mahayana.

The Chinese version of the Avalokitesvara is better known, the male aspect being Kwan Shai Yin and the female aspect being Kwan-yin. J. B. Pratt says: "The Little Lady Kwan-yin is one of the loveliest forms of Buddhist mythology. She has not a trait one could wish absent or altered. In the heart of the Chinese Buddhists she holds the place which a Madonna holds in that of the pious Catholic."

The second doctrine when put into action promotes culture and enlightenment, individually and collectively. The earlier history of Buddhism also testifies to this fact. The Asokan period in Asian history bears this point.

Today the world needs a reaffirmation of the noble message of the Buddha Dharma, the ultimate purpose of which is the attainment of enlightenment, happiness and peace for oneself and for all creations.

(An address read at the *Conspicuous of Religions and Philosophies held under the auspices of the Pure Life Society, Kuala Lumpur, Malaya*).

## MOKSHA

{*Sri Swami Sivananda*}

Moksha is release or freedom from births and deaths. It is the very nature of Brahman or the Absolute. It is the state of natural peace and bliss.

There are no grades or varieties in Moksha or Moksha. Moksha is not what is to be experienced in a different place or at a future time. It is experienced right here and now.

Liberation means the release of the individual soul from ego and ignorance. It is a total transformation of man's human nature into the divine nature. In Moksha is neither individuality nor collectivity. Moksha is Self-realization.

# Buddha's Advice to Householders

Translated by Bhikshu Silachara from the "Anguttara Nikaya"

Upon a time when the Blessed One was sojourning among the Koliyana, having taken up his abode at a Koliyan village called Kakkarpattam, a certain Koliyan, familiarly called "Long shanka," came where was the Blessed One and after due reverence paid, took his seat at one side. Thus seated, "Long shanka" the Koliyan spoke to the Blessed One in this wise:

"Lord we that live the household life, enjoying the pleasure of sense—we dwell with wife and child about us, we use the sweet sandal wood of Benares, we make our bodies fine with flowers and perfumes and all manner of odorous unguents, we handle gold and silver. If for us, Lord there be a Teaching conduced to our welfare and happiness in this present life, conduced to our welfare and happiness in lives to come, may the Blessed One be pleased to make known unto us that Teaching."

The Buddha said:

Four things there are, Byagghapeyya, that lead to the welfare and happiness of the householder in this present life. And what are these four things?

They are Energetic Activity, Preservation, Friendship with the Good, and Rightly Regulated Living.

What is Energetic Activity?

By whatsoever manner of work a layman earns his living, in that work or profession he is proficient and industrious. Resourceful and vigilant, he does all as it ought to be done, and sees that all is done as it ought to be done. This is what is called Energetic Activity.

What is Preservation?

Say that a layman is wealthy, has acquired abundant possession by the exercise of energetic activity, by the toll

of his hands, by the sweat of his brow in lawful, legitimate ways, such a one considers thus, having in view the protection and preservation of his property, 'Let me see to it that this, my property, is not taken from me by unjust authorities, nor stolen by thieves, nor consumed by fire, nor swept away by floods, nor despoiled by envious and unloving kinsmen.' This is what is Preservation.

What is Friendship with the Good?

Say that a layman lives in some village or town, where also dwells some other householder or son of a householder that is wise in virtue's ways, full of faith, full of virtue, full of liberality, full of wisdom, and say that he frequents the company of such, talks with them, holds discourse with them, from such full of faith he also learns to be full of faith, from such full of virtue he also learns to be full of virtue, from such full of liberality he also learns to be full of liberality, from such full of wisdom he also learns to be full of wisdom. This is what is called Friendship with the Good.

And what is Rightly Regulated Living?

Say that there is a layman aware of the extent of his income aware of the extent of his outgoings, who lives a balanced manner of life and, neither extravagant nor penurious thus resolves within himself 'I shall make it that my income shall be greater than my outgoings. I shall not let my outgoings be greater than my income.' Just as a retail dealer in any kind of merchandise, or the assistant of such, in taking up his scales to weigh his wares, knows "This way the balance will go down and that way the balance will go up," even so, the layman, knowing his income and outgo, living in moderate style, neither

prodigal nor parsimocious, will see that his income exceeds his expenditure, that his expenditure does not outrun his income

For if a layman, not being the possessor of any great abundance, should live in lavish style of him all the folk will say "A devourer of the tree, this householder eats up his wealth" Or if a layman, being possessed of ample means lives in miserable style, of him the folk will say "Food for the funeral pyre, this householder goes towards death! Wherefore let the layman, knowing well his income and expenses, regulate his mode of living accordingly and neither spendthrift nor yet niggardly, see that his income outweighs his outgo not his outgo his income This is what is called Rightly Regulated Living

Four channels there be by way of which wealth won by energetic activity is lost These ways are dealings with women, dealings with intoxicating liquors, dairings with dice and consorting with evil friends, evil companions, evil associates Suppose that there is a great tank having four inlets and four outlets and that some man stops up the inlets and opens wide the outlets the streams of rain water will not be able to find admittance and so the decrease, and not the increase of that great tank may be looked for Even thus is it with those four channels of loss of wealth—women, wine, dice and evil companions and friends

Four channels there be by way of which wealth won by energetic activity is brought to increase These channels are abstinence from dealings with women, abstinence from dealings with intoxicating liquors, abstinence from dealings with dice and consorting with good friends, good companions, good associates Suppose there is a great tank with inlets and outlets four of each, and that a man opens wide the inlets and

closes up the outlets the rain water streams will enter that tank, and its increase, not its decrease, may well be expected Even so is it with these four channels of wealth—abstinence from women, abstinence from wine, abstinence from diceing and coosorting with good companions and friends

These be the four things that lead to the welfare and happiness of the laymen in this present life

Four things, Byagghapajja there be that lead to the well being and happiness of the layman in lives to come, and what are these four things?

They are the Blessing of Faith, the Blessing of Virtue, the Blessing of Liberality, and the Blessing of Wisdom

What is the Blessing of Faith?

The layman who is faithful puts his trust in the wisdom supreme of the Accomplished One saying "This is He, the Blessed, the Exalted, the supremely Awakened One, the Perfect in Knowledge and Conduct, Knower of all the Worlds Guide of men that wish for Guidance the Blessed One" This is what is called the Blessing of Faith

What is the Blessing of Virtue?

The layman shuns killing, stealing, lying, lewdness, and the drinking of intoxicating liquors that steal away the wits This is what is called the Blessing of Virtue

What is the Blessing of Liberality?

The laymen lives his life with thought clean of the stain of miserliness free and liberal pure handed delighting in deeds of charity, giving to those that ask of him distributing alms This is what is called the Blessing of Liberality

And what is the Blessing of Wisdom?

The layman who is wise arrives at the

perception of the ceaseless rise and fall of things; he attains to wisdom through exalted penetration and insight; he moves towards total destruction of ill. This is what is called the Blessing of Wisdom.

These be the four things Byasghenaija, that lead to the well-being and happiness of the layman in lives to come

## Buddha's Advice to Initiates

### The Dhammapada

Associate not with the loved or the unloved, mendicants,  
For not to see the loved and to see the unloved is pain.  
Hold nothing dear, mendicants, for the loss of the loved is evil,  
And no bonds have they to whom nothing is loved or unloved.  
From what is loved is born grief, from the loved is born fear;  
But to one freed from loving anything is there no grief much less fear.  
From affection is born grief, from affection doth come fear,  
But to one freed from affection mendicants, is there no grief much less fear.  
From pleasure is born grief, from pleasure doth come fear,  
But to one freed from pleasure is there no grief, much less fear.

From desire is born grief, meditants from desire doth come fear,  
But to one freed from desire is there no grief, much less fear.  
What laughter, what joy is there, since the burning is there always within?  
Enveloped in darkness, mendicants, seek thou not the lamp?  
Why, behold the multi-hued figure, the accumulated mass of wounds,  
Afflicted, full of longings, to which no firmness is there, nor stability;  
This decrepit form, this nest of disease, this decaying body, ending in death,  
These grayish bones, being cast away infested with gourd worms;  
Having seen them, what pleasure remains, mendicants!

## THE TRUE SELF

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

The Atman is the true Self, the inner core of your being. It is immortal, homogeneous essence. It is the sum of all perfection and the source of all being. The quest for Atman is the quest for completeness or perfection. Vedanta begins with dispassion and proceeds along with the process of contemplation on Atman.

The senses are delecive and the knowledge which they give is limited. Sense-knowledge is a knowledge of appearance and not of Truth. Brahman or Absolute is unconditioned self contained and eternal. Negate all forms and objective experiences and assert "I am Brahman, the all-pervading, pure Consciousness." You will realize the Truth.

# What Buddhism Means to Me

Sri B. G. Kher

(Ex-Chief Minister of Bombay)

I believe that Buddhism is a part of the evolutionary process of Hinduism. When Buddha found that Hinduism of his time had got completely entangled in metaphysical speculations and elaborate ritualism, with his keen insight into the truth of things, he realized and preached his Dhamma and emphasized the need for purity of thought and conduct and for practising it in everyday life above everything. Spiritual thought can only develop in beings who have already attained an advance degree of moral perfection. If we overlook this and go on calling 'God, God', we will only deceive ourselves. This truth had been discovered before Buddha but it was being lost sight of and he emphasized it by his life and preaching.

Of all our prophets and seers Buddha is to my mind the most concrete and authentic to us Indians. He is the latest Avatar in the Hindu pantheon. Every devout Hindu refers to this age as the 'Buddhavat' in his daily worship. Many of Buddha's relics can be actually seen not only in India but outside also. The earliest available records describe him as a handsome person of magnetic personality, of unshakeable dignity, of a gentle sense of humour and full of tolerance and sympathy not only to men but to all living beings, and many vivid stories of incidents in his life have come down to us. From his first sermon on 'Setting in Motion the Wheel of Righteousness'—which he preached in the Deer Park of Isipatana near Benares to the last one given on his death bed when in a famone

exhortation to his sorrowing disciples he urged them to work out their own salvation with diligence and reach the very topmost height, his words have the authentic ring of a live personality which reverberate in our minds. And the Darshan of Lord Buddha's image inundates you with peace, purity and compassion.

Mrs Rhys Davis says, "Gautam was born and brought up and lived and died as a Hindu. There was not much in the metaphysics and principles of Gautam which cannot be found in one or the other of the orthodox systems, and a great deal of his morality could be matched from the earlier or later Hindu books." I will not dilate on this subject. I have read, and most of you must be familiar with Dr. V. M. Karkiñ's article on 'Some popular misconceptions about Lord Buddha and His Teaching'. He has very ably analyzed the misconceptions and refuted them.

There is a notion amongst orthodox Hindus that Buddhism is repugnant to Hinduism, and is antagonistic to it. If we survey carefully the growth of Hinduism, we will find that Buddhism was only a phase in the development of Hindu thought, that is why Buddha was accepted as an Avatar by us. How can we disown him? Buddha was a fulfilment of the need of the times in which he was born though he rebelled against some of the thought-currents of the time as every reformer must and does. His life work was to popularize the great ethical truths which he discovered are eternal, and to influence

the thought and conduct of the large masses of people and not only the élite

Instead of making religion the concern of the priest and the learned, he brought it into the day-to-day life of the people. He emphasized the need of love, purity, renunciation and service. It is really incongruous on the part of anyone who calls himself a Hindu today to say that Buddhism is repugnant to Hinduism. It is also wrong to abhor Hinduism as some people do and to glorify Buddhism by contrast. Buddhism came as a process in the development of Hindu thought by natural evolution and such peaceful evolution has been the characteristic of our progress. It is not very helpful, therefore, to ask people to give up Hinduism and be converted to Buddhism instead. What is wanted is a Buddhist renaissance and this will come by studying and understanding Buddha's teachings properly and resolutely weaving them into our own life and conduct.

The essence of Buddha's teachings is summed up in the verse

सदूरं पापस्य धक्करणं उपलभ्य शुद्धसप्तदा ।  
समिति परियादनं येत् बुद्धान् सासन ॥

Refraining from all sinful acts, striving after righteous conduct keeping the mind pure' This is what Buddha has ordained. Hindus and Buddhists should strive to obey this ordinance.

Buddha intended that his religion should be a practical one to be put into effect in one's daily life. He preached the unity of life—not only of men as brothers but of all living beings as parts of a complex and well co-ordinated living unit. How could anyone who believes in this unity tolerate caste snobbery or un-

touchability? Realization of this unity must lead to compassion, to non-hatred, as a sense of oneness with life in all forms means that love of one's self is true love of all life. Whatever tends to separate one aspect of it from another must cause suffering to the other and work against the Law, the Dhamma. All forms of selfishness which is desired for self gratification at the expense of other parts of the unit must, therefore, be renounced.

An intuitive realization of this must have been the cause of the Great Renunciation by Buddha himself when he renounced his kingdom, young wife and child and went like a beggar in quest of Truth. After such renunciation comes surrender. The Buddha preached surrender to Buddha Dhamma and Sangha, so that one goes up step by step to something higher and nobler than one's narrow self. Love is to be deliberately cultivated. Buddha emphasized that hatred does not cease by hatred but should be conquered by love—a teaching which was nobly carried out about two centuries later by his great royal follower Asoka. Such love should be fruitful in the service of mankind. A few days after his first sermon to which I referred above, Buddha sent out some of his followers into the world with the exhortation 'Go ye forth, O Bhikshus for the gain of the many, for the welfare of the many, out of compassion for the world. Proclaim the Doctrine glorious presch ye a life of holiness perfect and pure.'

Buddha also taught that excess of any type was to be avoided. He preached the middle way i.e., moderation in all that one does. He referred to it as a path which bestows vision, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to

awakening, to Nirvana.' It is a process of developing oneself between the 'pairs of opposites' avoiding all extremes. The goal of man demands complete mastery over the flesh but though sensuality must be avoided, asceticism or mortification can be equally harmful. It leads also to a dangerous price. Does not the Geeta also lay down:

नात्यरत्नम् ये गेति न चात्यसदनक्षतः ।

सुग्राहरवररथ्य विग्न वृचति हुखदाम् ॥

"Abandon extremes and control yourself." Buddha repeatedly stressed that we should not waste our energy in mere intellectual disputation as to who created the universe and how it was created and why is here all the suffering and evil with which we are constantly confronted; but he taught that we should take them as they are and strive hard for self development. He laid stress on individual efforts for achieving progress. Our ignorance can be dispelled and our sorrow removed by the knowledge of the four noble Truths, viz.,

- 1 The misery of existence
- 2 The cause of such misery, viz., desire
- 3 The destruction of that desire
- 4 The means of achieving this destruction which is the noble eightfold path

So we should strive and remove our ignorance.

In these days when we are all preoccupied with the question 'Is there a God?' I was very pleased when I came across a beautiful definition of belief in God given by a great Christian writer. He says, 'To believe in God is to desire His existence and, what is more to act as though He existed.' Reality is beyond the conception of the finite intellect. "Many men who are intelligent and of good faith, imagine they cannot believe in God because they are unable to conceive Him.

An honest man, educated with scientific curiosity should not need to visualize God any more than a physician needs to visualize the electron. Any attempt at repreaenation is necessarily crude and false in both cases (Du Nouy)." This is also the proposition discovered by the Upantshada. God cannot be perceived by the mind and the senses: यतो याक्षीनिदिवन्ते प्राण्य सनात रह एवं निरा तक्षा मतिरापनेया। "Therefore, attempts at description of Reality or God are misleading, unprofitable and waste of time" व्रिगुरयविषयतदेव विश्वास्युषी भवात् न taught the Geeta. Also

यज्ञार्थं उद्याने सर्वतः संपुत्रोदेते  
तामसः गु वेद्यु माद्यास्य विजानतः ।

"mere glorification of the Veda will not help." So what is the way?

The Buddha preached the Eightfold Path of right view, right aims, right speech, right acts, right livelihood, effort, right concentration, and finally, right Samadhi, leading to full Enlightenment. The essence of Buddha's teaching for us ordinary people is in the exhortation: "Cease to do evil, learn to do good and keep the mind pure."

A great biologist has stated that the goal of the progressive process of evolution which has lasted millions of years is the realization of morally perfect beings free from egotism, greed and lust for power and right in higher promise. He thinks evolution continues in our time no longer on the physiological or anatomical plane but on the spiritual and moral plane. We sometimes swerve from the true course and then a leader is born who takes us back, and leads us to the right path. Humanity has in the past thrown up a few such individuals, who, by their example and precept, have given us a glimpse of this higher promise. Buddha was one of them. Christ was another. And there are

others. We must do our best to try to follow their teachings in our own life and conduct and thus further the cause for which they laboured ceaselessly.

It has been said by an eminent atheist that the moral code has remained constant for ages, not varied except for a few details. It can be condensed into a small number of rules which appeared in the four corners of the world at different epochs. 'These rules must be inviolable and their progress can consist only in their diffusion.' Nobody can doubt that they do diffuse slowly and are spreading progressively. This progress is indeed very slow but no doubt there is such progress and it has been the aim of all religions, to bring it about. 'They have not succeeded

because in spite of the high ideals of their founders they have sometimes been left by men who have made mistakes and spent much of their time in fighting each other.' The happiness of peoples depends in part on the unity of religious thought. It must be endeavour of all educated persons to bring about this unity and those who have understood the doctrine of Buddha cannot do otherwise. We see that the essentials in the teachings of the Gita the पद्म-नाम and नीति, भरत्या, सुरिणि, etc., of Patanjali, the five Mahavratis of the Jains all emphasize the same moral truths. The great need is to bring them into the day to day life of all people and thus bring about such religious unity. Let us all work to this end with all our strength.

## Practical Tibetan Buddhist Meditation

Sri Aswad Hasan  
(Azamgarh, U.P.)

Tibetan meditation is classified in three parts objective meditation, meditation without objects and Yoga of the disseminate. Meditation on objects is further subdivided as meditation on non-breathing objects and meditation on breathing objects. Meditation on non breathing objects is again classified as meditation on living objects and meditation on non-living objects.

Meditation on living objects means meditation on the Buddha, and his various attributes, e.g., his cosmic compassion, holy and inspiring life etc.

Meditation on non-living objects means concentration on some physical object which is visualized in the mind's eye. Example Visualize a lotus. See it as clearly as possible. Count and examine the various petals separately. Then slowly

try visualize the various petals of the lotus opening out, and the emergence of a shining figure of an out of the lotus. Or, one might invent similar exercises which charm and fascinate his imagination. The object of these exercises is to make the practice of concentration interesting to the mind, because to the natural tendency of the extrovert man spiritual practices are irksome and disgusting in the beginning unless they possess some charming effect.

There is another exercise. Visualize a dot between the two eye brows. The colour of this dot should be white in the case of a person whose temperament is neither too easily excitable nor too much dull. In the case of a person whose mind is nervous, volatile and restless the colour of the dot should be deep blue. This will cure the restlessness of the mind. In the

case of a person whose mind is dull, sluggish and drowsy, the colour should be brilliant and fiery red. All these colour-therapeutic hints have a very practical effect upon the mind. They obviate temperamental obstacles to meditation. As is well-known, these techniques have been rightly attested by Dr. Balbitt of the U.S.A., a pioneer of the modern colour-therapy.

Meditation on breathing objects means Pranayam. In the Yoga of the Great Symbol, *Pranayam* is treated as a kind of meditation. Meditation on breathing has three stages. In the first stage the Sadhak inhales and exhales in his normal habitual way, with the only difference that he is conscious of his breathing and counts their number. Now he should fix up a regular programme of cononing 500 to 1000 inhalations and exhalations every day, or he may adopt the method of counting the number of breathing for exactly one hour. This is a very practical application of commonsense psychology to Yoga.

*Pranayam* as we know, primarily means the attuning of the mind to the process of breathing thus leading to control of thought. For as Western scientists have proved there is a very intimate connection between breathing and thinking. It is quite possible to test the emotional reactions of a man by his breathing image traced out by a pneumograph. Normally, breathing goes on automatically and unconsciously through the action of the sympathetic nervous system.

The exercise of counting the number of breathing is a subtle psychological device for turning the conscious attention to such an involuntary and habitual act as breathing which would otherwise prove irksome to concentrate upon that is to say, when a man has to keep count of the number of breathing

his attention is naturally and automatically turned towards it without any special effort at concentrating the mind.

In the second stage the Sadhak breathes normally and as usual, but tries to study and observe the actual process of how the breath enters into the body, how long it remains, how it goes out and what are the actual physiological processes of each stage. It is helpful for the practitioner to study the actence of breath in some text book of medical physiology, so that he may be able to imagine each step in breathing correctly. In the book *Lagarrhara* published by the Pali Text Society in London it is written 'He mindfully breathes in and mindfully breathes out. As he draws a long breath, he knows "a long breath I breathe in," and as he breathes out he knows "a long breath I breathe out." As he draws a short breath he knows "a short breath I breathe in," and as he breathes out, he knows "a short breath I breathe out."

Only after mastering these two primary exercises the Tibetan student is permitted to try the traditional exercises of Pranayam. The psychological insight of these Tibetan Lamas is admirable in providing a method of training by simple and easy gradations. No one is allowed to ignore these two primary exercises because of their apparent simplicity.

A special kind of *Pranayam* is practised by the Tibetan Buddhists for developing telepathy and clairvoyance. Sit in Padmasana spinal cord erect. Breathe in and breathe out. While inhaling the breath imagine that innumerable fine coloured rays of light are entering the body from outside. While exhaling imagine that innumerable rays of a similar kind are going out from the body and spreading themselves in the outer space. The five colours are red, white, green, blue and yellow.

# Psychology and Philosophy of Buddhism

Sri Simon Hewavitarne

(England)

It is almost a truism that, in a world where man has been trained from time immemorial to look upon it objectively and a thing of concrete form and shape, it is idle to expect people to listen to theoretical speculations, much less to study and devote their attention to them. We are used to tangible effects and results but do not enquire into their causes. Science is interesting because it deals with experiments which appeal to our five senses. We hope the following essay on one of the most practical of philosophies that were ever given to the world will be of some use to those who desire to learn more of the sublime philosophy of Buddhism.

There have been systems and systems of philosophy in India, Greece, Babylon and Europe ever since man has begun to think, and every one of them is an attempted explanation or interpretation of life. Some are occupied with the beginnings of life, others with its end and after effects. We have some of them still in our thoughts, grinded in us from generation to generation in all of them the divine origin of man is the principal theme. He is asked to lead a good life in order that he may live a life of happiness in a place called Heaven after his death. This was the state of thought in India when Gautama the Prince of the Sankhyes published his grand interpretation of existence.

We read in the Mahavagga, the opening chapters of the Vinaya Pitaka and the First Book of the Buddhist Scriptures, of the predominant mental attitude of the people of India extreme asceticism on the one part and boundless luxury on the other. Gautama, before he became the Buddha, perceived fully these two attitudes and

also the sorrow to which man was continually exposed. From his earliest youth he was desirous of finding a solution to this problem sorrow, its cause and its removal. With this object before him, he retired from the householder's life, wandered amidst the Northern plains of India, seeking and studying under all the masters of the different schools of Philosophy of his time. After six years of continuous struggle, he began to think out a way for himself, and at last discovered the Great Truths under the Bodhi Tree at Buddha Gaya.

Buddhism is distinguished from all other Religions and philosophies by its unique character. Its principles are just now beginning to be understood and, although the latest mystic evolution of Greek and mediæval systems of thought is in harmony with them, the other aspects of Buddhist Philosophy are still not recognized.

The first Buddhist literature came to Europe through the efforts of Hodgson and Csoma de Koros and consisted of legendary yet beautiful writings on the life of the Great Sage. The more important philosophical doctrines of Buddhism were introduced into Europe only a few years ago.

Though Modern Science has made tremendous strides European Philosophy and Psychology are still in their infancy, not being more than four hundred years old the learned men before that time were full of enigmatic theories gained through the Bible and its apologetics and even now many modern philosophers cannot get rid of theistic ideas.

## Doctrines of Buddhism

Buddhism is a combination of Psychology, Philosophy and Ethics. Unlike other

cular point in space. The complete mental product is called a Percept, and the process Perception. When we name things or see things, we at once perceive what they are. The operation looks so simple, yet it is the result of learning from experience. Some of us have heard of an aeroplane, and we perceive it by its picture, but to those who have not seen a picture of it the word or the machine itself conveys no perception. Accordingly the Buddhist philosophical way of perceiving man as a combination of extension, sensibility, perception and consciousness must come also as a result of training, reflection or introspection. Perception also comes through consciousness in combination with one or several sense-organs. It is the interpretation of the stimulus or symbol.

Samsara is the fourth in this fivefold combination. It is a process of thought-thinking conceptions or mental concomitants. "These perform their respective functions in combination as one whole, of act speech, or thought." It is the result of motive thought, and it is also motive-thought itself.

#### Consciousness

Now comes the last and the most important item, namely, Vijnana or Consciousness. It is extremely difficult to say what consciousness is, but it seems to be the relation that subsists between the subject and object. Animistic religions have personified or objectified it in various ways. Among these personifications are soul, breath dove shadow, butterfly, fragrance harmonious music and lastly, Jehovah Holy Ghost and the modern spiritualized conception of God. "However much the telescopes for observing the stars," writes Max Muller, "have been improved the observatories of the soul have remained much the same."

According to Jewish philosophy con-

sciousness was looked upon as an entity that remained inside the body and governed the doings of Man. It was held to be unchanging and constant, and at death it remained somewhere until at the Day of Judgment it is sent to heaven or hell. It is only recently that modern European philosophers and scientists have come to recognize that everything is in a state of flux or change, that nothing is permanent, yet this Doctrine was taught by the Buddha in its application, not only to the body, but also to the mind. According to Buddhism then, as we saw in our analysis sensibility, perceptions, thinking and consciousness form the mind, and the Rupa or Form, as explained above forms the body. Man therefore is a combination of body and mind, or when the four combinations plus the extension, cohesion, etc., come together and are arranged in a certain form, we give the completed result the name "Man." This recognition of Man objectively is Knowledge and the non-recognition is called Ignorance or Avijja. One who recognizes Man in this manner is a Buddhist, and the psychology that explains this system is Buddhism.

#### World

Now Man or this fivefold combination is the self the world or the environment that affects him through the five senses is the non-self. The world, therefore, is composed of two great phenomena, the self and the non-self, the ego and the non-ego. This non-self is "not the same as self, nor is it another. If any self looks upon the non-self as another, his view is wrong. He is a Micchadilhi, self interested (Lobha Sahagata), under an illusion (Moha Sahagata) therefore he is unsympathetic (Dvesa Sahagata). These three principles of self-interest, non-sympathy or antipathy, and illusion are three primary causes of all evil. The three opposite

qualities, namely, selflessness, sympathy and understanding (Aloha Adosa, Amoha) lead the mind to Happiness.

Buddhism does not trouble about the concreta beginning of life or the world, because the enquiry does not lead to freedom from sorrow, such enquiry is also profitless and foolish. Wherever and whenever we assert such a beginning for Man, Buddhism analyzes him and finds him to be an object of thought, a highly complex compound constantly changing and giving rise to new combinations. There is no place for an Almighty, unchanging God because that is also an object of thought the result of an inevitable function a pictorial introduction to the formulation of an ethical code when the mind of man was in its folly.

#### Mind

The mind of man is compared with the current of a river (Nadi eato viya) the Buddhist idea of conscious existence. A person standing on the bank of a river thinks that the river is the same, though not a particle of water which he sees at any point remains where it was a moment ago, and as the beginning and the end of a river receive the special names 'source' and mouth though they are still composed of the same material as the body of the river itself even so, the source and the mouth of this river of life are respectively termed 'birth' and 'death' though still composed of the same water of life."

There is no transmigration of a physical soul entity nor is there continued personal existence, but there is continued existence. This everlasting process goes on and never ends until the causes that bring about physical existence are removed. Men mistake similarity for identity, and are apt to think of this ever changing being as an enduring and abiding soul.

According to Buddhism, the subject

or the self that thinks, and his environment (ie., the object) are both changing. There is a relation always between the subject and object. The environment of the self is called stimuli which, as such, are objects of thought. These stimuli are of various kinds and may consist of sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, or concrete mental objects or abstract mental objects.

Consciousness or existence moves on in a normal state where there is no stimulus, but, at the approach of any one of the above stimuli, consciousness is affected and the subject is aware of the objective presentation. This first awareness is contact. Then follows perception by which the object is recognized. After this comes volition, which may be conditioned by ignorance and self interest. Then comes a mental concomitant (Ekaggata) by which the object is individualized as occupying a certain position in space and time. This is followed by the selective activity of attention (Manaskara), and lastly comes the psychic life "which infuses mental life into one and all and constitutes the whole into a psychical state". These seven mental concomitants are common to all acts of consciousness.

#### Perspective

So far the subject is aware of the object as an individual, i.e., which consciousness is again active to find out more about the object. This is done by the six following properties viz., directing the mind towards the object, continued application, decision, or the property by which the mind chooses between two courses, effort to arrive at cognition then the interest in the object, and lastly the intention with respect to act.

Action is inoperative. The merely mechanical performance of various ethical rules without reference to the primary motives is vain and profitless. If actions are

performed without self-interest or ill-will and with a true realization of the nature of things, life will not be a lie but a truth, and Happiness will be realized.

There is a simple Buddhist story which fully explains the Buddhist aspect of life. A blind man said, "I cannot believe in a world of appearances, there are no colours, there is no sun, no moon, there are no stars, there is nothing."

His friends chid him, but he still repeated the same things. Then a Rishi, one of the ancient Hindu Philosophers, saw the man and applied a concoction of four simples to the man's eyes. Immediately his eyes were opened. The man shouted out in ecstasy, "I see beautiful trees, the bright sun, the lovely moon and stars."

Then certain holy man said, "You are vain and arrogant, and nearly as blind as you were before. You see the outside of things and not the inside."

The fundamental problems of Buddhism are put into the opening verse of the Dhammapada, "That the mind is prime, the biggest and the mental is the Law. The mind follows the vocal and bodily action." In studying the philosophy of Buddhism, it is essential to read a few English works on Psychology, without which Buddhist ideas are rather puzzling. There is a large number of works on the subject, among which we may mention Dr Sully's *The Human Mind*, Prof James' *Principles of Psychology*, Prof Baldwin's *Outlines of Psychology*, and Prof Osmond's *Concepts of Philosophy*.

## Bearing of Buddhism Upon Free-Will and Determinism

Sri Edward Greenly  
(England)

Of all the Cruxes by which religious and ethical thought has, age after age been troubled and perplexed, none is more famous than that concerning Predestination and the Freedom of the Will—the conflict that is between the ideas of Law in the Mental and Choice in the Moral Order of things.

The difficulty is a special affliction of no particular school or creed. Pagan and Christian, Catholic and Protestant, Theist and Atheist, Creationist and Evolutionist, are confronted by it alike.

In Greco-Roman literature for example, emerges ever and anon that *Fate* that stood even above the gods fugitives from Pompeii asked of each other in the darkness was "this the promised end" or at

least the image of that horror" that should involve both gods and men and beasts in one common conflagration.

*Fate* as the will of Allah edged the Moslem sword and no sooner had the Christian Church organized its polity and its theology than it was called upon to meet this question. How it met it we all know from the time of the great Augustine of that of Calvin on to Boston and Jonathan Edwards, in whose hands it assumes a form darker even than that terrible one in King Lear.

"As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods,

They kill us for their sport

Buddhism and Free-will

Thence the riddle has been handed on to the schools of Evolutionary Ethics, and

is master of earnest debauch among them at the present time.

The Crux is a simple one. For the Theist it takes the form:—Men is the creation of our God. That God is Omnipotent and Omnipresent. All that Man was to be was therefore fully known to that God at the time of his creation—indeed from all eternity at time. Prescience with Power is Determination Everyting in Man, therefore, is predestined, and Man's Will and Choice can be nothing but fiction and illusion. For the Non-Theist it runs —The Universe is Coemos. All is Law Cause and Effect are universal. Man, or any other being, is therefore the effect of an endless chain causes. Free Will and choice, however, could not be so determined themselves causes, they can depend upon no other cause, or they would not be free. Free Will, therefore, is an Uncaused Cause, an exception in Nature, a miracle, and in Nature there is nothing whatever in give rise to such miracle, if indeed that which is uncaused can be given rise to by anything!

Yet, for Theist and Non-Theist alike:—If this be so, then what place is there for any moral quality in Man, for good or bad, praise or blame, moral responsibility or duty? Nothing could have been in the least degree other than it is. The whole body of such conceptiona vanishes.

No fault can be found with the reasoning of either party causation and ethics cannot be reconciled. The logical deadlock is complete.

The ethical instinct, nevertheless, is deep-seated, the ethical idea cannot be expelled, and yet it is impossible to admit of any such Antinomy in the nature of things.

Now, in the Buddhist teaching, a new champion, new at any rate to Europe, enters the field. With he fare any better than the

other? Before the Dark Tower has fallen off the last adventures his peers" the pain in their own breast precisely at that victorious moment when their spear entered their adversary's heart. Terrible are the odds against success; and yet the issue cannot be evaded. The very existence of the system is at stake. For Buddhism, as we all know, is nothing if not ethical. If Ethics disappears, Buddhism disappears along with it—or that there can be no question. On the other hand, tremendous is the prize. The Teaching that can face that problem will have, beyond all doubt, the ethical and religious future in its hands.

Is the system equipped in any different manner from its predecessors? We have seen that their reasoning is unimpeachable. Nothing then is to be hoped from better reasoning. But, in a deadlock of this kind the trouble must be hidden, not in the reasoning, but in the materials with which that deals, must be concealed in the assumptions of one party or the other, or of both. The question then is—Does Buddhism set out with any different assumptions? If not, it may as well give up the quest. If it does, then there is some hope.

#### Ethics

As for Causation, that certainly is a fundamental assumption in Buddhism, as vital to the system as ethics itself, so that, for better or for worse, it appears to be committed about as deeply to Determinism as a system can well be. And with this is bound up the fact that Buddhist Ethics is essentially utilitarian, is a means to an end, and depends upon no unexplained "that" imposed upon mankind from without.

Clearly then, Buddhist Ethics must have much in common with more than one system that is current in Europe.

There is, however, one important as-

suspicion contained in all the European systems—they all connect ethic, in one way or another, with "Happiness" in Life. The Theistic ethics does not, indeed rest upon Happiness for its ultimate authority, but Happiness is the promised reward, conferred in this life (no matter what external calamity) by the approbation and blessing of God; in the next by the impending joys of heaven. To the Utilitarian Ethics, whether in its original Benthamite or its later evolutionary form, Happiness is not merely a reward, is the source of authority itself, the end to which ethics is the means—"the greatest happiness of the means"—"the greatest happiness of the great number" being explicitly the goal of the system.

Now, to any system that contains this element, the idea of Duty is essential. For in the hunt for this same Happiness arises the whole of that body of immoral impulse which it is the very function of Ethics to subdue. Consider man and that on the authority of Religion or of Ethics itself in the view that he may still rightly seek after this Happiness, and you have imposed upon the system the task of delimiting that as legitimate, that as illegitimate happiness, of impressing men with distinctions between a higher and a lower happiness. No completely satisfying reason can be given for that sacrifice of self, sacrifice sometimes utter and once for all which must nevertheless be enjoined. Even in heaven, happiness being still the aim, the danger still must lurk, as indeed the story of the fallen angels shows that men have dimly seen. Ethics in short, is keeping alive that very wild beast whom it should seek to slay. Placed in a world where happiness does appear to be attainable here or there by this or by that, man needs the check of this idea of Duty, the famous Categorical Imperative, to direct his choice.

Proclaim, on the other hand, this search after Happiness to be as for an Ignis Fatuus that moves ever onward in advance of the seeker, proclaim not attainment of bliss but freedom from sorrow as the aim of life, show also success in this quest to be possible only on condition that the other be totally abandoned, and the situation becomes wholly different. Incidentally, the task of Ethics is immensely lightened, for the axe has been laid at the very root of the whole monstrous tree of all immoral impulse. That, however, does not belong to the present subject. What we have to note is that by this inversion of the nature of Life's aim all need for the idea of duty is at once got rid of. For there is no longer any question of legitimate or illegitimate happiness. To him who knows that all such grasping carries with it sorrow, all such questions have disappeared. Suppose it be asked, for example, how much he may rightly take while yet his neighbour lacks, how much it may be his duty to give—he knows the measure of his begrudging of those goods to be a measure of his attachment to them, and that again a measure of the sorrow that will come. What need have we of further witness?

#### Soul

More far-reaching still is another consideration. At the Semito-European systems, Theistic or otherwise posit, explicitly or implicitly, a psychic entity, a soul self, or individual—doer of the deed, thinker of the thought, subject of the experience. Now, for Ethical purposes, an imperative necessity exists to link up this soul or self with its deeds, its thoughts, and their results. Therefore, to all animistic Ethics a whole machinery of concepts is essential. The soul or self must be good or bad, must merit praise or blame, must arouse moral approbation or indignation.

These, however, are the very ideas that

we have seen in stand in hopeless conflict wlib the idea of Causation. Consequently, there would seem to be but one way out of the dilemma—io qsi rid, that is, of the psychic entity itself that makes them necessary.

Truly, a heroic remedy! Can any system be expected ever to respond in such a demand? Yet one there is which not only may do but has done this. Buddhism, in its teaching of "Anatta" expunged from its view of Life every trace of psychic "substance," Soul, or Self saw Life as no Entity whatsoever but a Process, no Individual, but literally a "Dividual," resolvable into its psychic forces passing through time as an eddy passes through space. Looking upon Life thus all need for the concepts in question vanishes, and with them vanishes also the last possibility of conflict between Ethics and Causation.

In the light of this Dynamical instead of substantial conception, we can link deed and thought directly with their consequences. "Psyche" the "Hard Atom" of the world of mind, has gone, no intermediary is left and with eye fixed upon no "doer" but on deed alone the whole ethical process can be conceived in causal terms. Is there then no place for Will at all in Buddhism? On the contrary, as Mr. Rhys Davids has abundantly shown, Will, Conation, Effort play as much a part in this as in any other system—more indeed if anything.

### Will

But what part? If I know that all is predetermined why should I do anything (the old old question) but fold my hands and let these forces work?

Well, be it so. But is so why confine that principle to matters strictly ethical? A dinner is before me, I am hungry. I am predestined, these reasoners must admit, either to eat that dinner or not to do so.

Suppose, then, I fold my hands and await my destiny. There can be but one answer. I was without doubt, predestined to go without that dinner. A day or two of such reasoning however, and forces will so operate that my destiny will be as irresistible to eat as it then was to abstain.

"Will" exists, but it is no self originating uncaused force. Certain elements go to the making of it, it is a caused compounded thing. Sometimes we can discern enough to effect an analysis of it into those elements, sometimes not. But in any case, Will is the resultant, the net outcome, of a complex of desires. A conscious being, like anything else, moves in the direction of least resistance, and that is determined by the desires at work within its system. What, then, determines the desires, determines also the will. And here comes in the excellence of Buddhist ethics in assigning an great a part to Knowledge. If our desires are determined by ignorance action will result in sorrow, if by Knowledge, in avoidance of sorrow.

### Knowledge

At a banquet of the Borgias two men sit, and the wine goes round. One knows the cup is poisoned, and he does not drink. The other knows nothing, drinks, and dies. The destiny of the one was life, of the other death. What made the difference between those two destinies? Knowledge. Nothing else. Knowledge then, is Destiny.

Ignorance, we may say, leading to desire for happiness, is one kind of destiny. Knowledge, leading to desire for sorrow's ceasing, the other kind. Not knowing, I seek to drink my fill of joy. Then I hear the Dhamma. That shows me the poison in the cup of life and I turn away. Desire is changed by Knowledge. "Surely, however, there is something more some from within-arising power in those great moral conflicts that from time to time shake the heart of man? For here

man actually turns from that which he desires, and with a mighty self-originated effort, urges himself to that which he does not desire." Even here however, the ancient Buddhist formula is true—"There is no self herein." He has discerned the poison in the cup, and loves he the wine ever so dearly, he yet loves escape from craving's sorrow more. True, there is effort mighty effort, and great resistance to that effort. Look, though, down over the bows of a steamship. There is evidence, in abundance, of effort and of resistance also. Yet nothing is happening but that the resistance of the water to the passage of the ship is less than that of the steam in the cylinders to compression.

Examples might be multiplied of the casistic knots that this simple principle will cut.

#### Final Ideal

To return Buddhist Ethics is based entirely upon desire for sorrow's ceasing, joined with knowledge of the means for this. Recognizing no soul or psychic entity, dispensing altogether with duty, responsibility, praise or blame, conflicting in no way, therefore, with the Reign of Universal Law, Buddhism presents to us an Ethics that, once seen, takes hold upon the mind with a grasp like that of the unyielding powers of Nature.

Not that we can at a stroke dispense

with all the old time honoured motives duty, responsibility, merit and the like, and walk at once by that clear Light alone. Most likely that would spell disaster, and bring the reaction that dogs all premature and violent revolutions. Seek indeed we must for the fullest Truth that we can find. Realize that, and live by it as consistently as may be. But behind us lie ages upon ages of animistic teaching—not at a single effort may we cut loose from balance of thought, upon the clear conception of sorrow and of sorrow's ceasing that is its underlying law. Few attain to light like that.

And even so, there is a further stage, that of the "organically moral." Effort is good but better still is to pass beyond the need of effort. The ethical movement of the mind must become instinctive and instantaneous, like the starting of the finger from hot iron.

Lastly, not only are the crutches of the animistic ethics fit aids only for the ethically lame, but moral ideas altogether denote some degree of imperfection. Where these are there still are "thine and mine" thou and I" still there seems some self herein." Before the full Light of the An Atta vision, Ethics vanishes along with self. "To say nothing of unrighteousness" said the Teacher, "ye must leave even righteousness behind."

#### TRUTH

Truth is Beauty. Beauty is Truth. Truth Goodness and beauty are facets of the same sapphire. Know the Truth, it shall make you free. Truth is that which exists in the past, present and future. Truth is Existence. Truth is Brahman. Truth is Perfection. Truth is Freedom. Truth alone triumphs. Virtue abides where there is Truth vice, where there is untruth. There is no religion higher than Truth. Practice of Truth brings peace. Truth is the gateway to eternal Bliss.

—Sri Swami Sivananda

# Essence of Buddhism

Sri Swami Sivananda

*(Text of a Speech)*

We get materials for the life and teachings of Buddha from the sacred Pali literature the most important of which are the three Tripitakas. The three Tripitakas or the Three Baskets, as they have to be translated, are the Vinaya Pitaka or the discipline basket, the Sutta Pitaka or the Instructive basket and the Abhidhamma Pitaka or the metaphysical basket. These constitute the sacred literature of the Buddhists. They are written in the Pali language, the language which was in use among the common people living in the North Central India in the ancient days. Later on a number of Sanskrit books were also written dealing with the life and teachings of Buddha, and these are the sources of information.

### Life of Buddha

As regards the life of Buddha, it has been culled out from many writings of pious Buddhists which have taken the form of legends. Though there is much that is legendary in nature, considerable historical material can be culled out of that literature. The opinion at present accepted by the historians about the date of birth of Gautama is 557 B.C. According to history, he was a prince born of King Suddhodana of the Sakya clan an independent clan living in North India. His mother was called Mayadevi. The legendary accounts are that the spirit of Buddha descended in a dream in the form of a white elephant into the womb of queen Mayadevi and this dream was interpreted by the astrologers or dream readers as an indication that a very enlightened personage was going to be born in the royal family.

A year hence Queen Mayadevi became pregnant and when the confine-

ment was being expected, she requested her husband King Suddhodana to allow her to go to her father's house, and therefore King Suddhodana sent her in a golden palanquin attended by a number of courtiers and while she was passing, she had to go through a grove of trees. The trees were in full blossom and the branches were filled with flowers and she had a desire to stay for some time in the grove disporting with nature and her desire was at once obeyed. She got down and when she was playing for some time under a majestic Sal tree, she had a desire to catch hold of a big branch and, according to the story although the branch was too high, of its own accord, it fell itself down and when she got hold of it she gave birth to Gautama Buddha. After some time she was brought to Kapilavastu and soon afterwards queen Mayadevi died.

One of the people who came to see the child was an ascetic, who was also an old friend of King Suddhodana and known very well for his wisdom. He said, "The child will become either the monarch of the world or become a great saint, the Enlightened One, dispelling the darkness of ignorance from the four corners of the world." Then prince Suddhodana asked, "What are the signs which would indicate that the child was going to renounce?" "When this young man sees old age, disease and death and a monk, he will renounce the world." Therefore, Suddhodana took care to see that Gautama in his childhood was surrounded only by beautiful damsels everything that was good and good looking. Orders were issued that proper watch should be kept in all places so that an old man or a monk might not enter into the neighbourhood.

Once Gautama asked his charioteer to take him to a nearby park as usual. Then the gods appeared before him in the form of an old man. He asked the charioteer who he was because he had never seen an old man before. He replied that he was an old man and that every one had to become old like him. A few days later there was a diseased man appearing. Some days later there appeared a corpse and sometime still later a monk also appeared. These facts were reported to his father, King Suddhodana, and he redoubled his efforts to prevent Buddha from going away, but his mind had already changed and he was more and more convinced of the necessity of getting away.

#### Renunciation

He left his house in his 29th year, after he was already married and a child was born to him. He thought that the child was a lesser and he left the family in the night attended only by his faithful servant called Channa' and a horse called 'Kantaka'. In the dead of night, he wanted to see what the new child was like and he passed into the room where his wife was. He found that his wife was having her hand over the child and he thought that if he killed the child he would wake up his wife. So without disturbing the child he went away. He crossed a river called Anoma, and then he asked his servant to take back the horse, and with great reluctance the attendant went back with the horse.

Then Buddha went to a place where there were a number of ascetics. He stayed there for some time with them observing how they were leading their life for the purpose of getting Self realization. They were going through all kinds of self mortification and their bodies had been reduced to skin and bone. He thought that he should also mortify his body and so constructed a small hut for the purpose of staying there and

did penance, his majestic appearance attracted a number of people and five great ascetics came and began to do service to him. There he practised austerities in a very severe fashion for the purpose of gaining Mukti. For six years he went through self mortification only to find himself reduced to skin and bone and he thought that this was not the way in which he should spend his time, because it did not lead him anywhere.

Therefore, he decided to eat more and look after his health. At that time there came the daughter of a local inhabitant. She brought milk and he drank it. Then the five ascetics thought that the prince was once again drawn by his old Samskaras, that he had fallen from the path and they left him. But he realized that the real path that would lead man to God was not one of extreme asceticism or one of extreme attachment to earthly pleasures but the middle path, the golden mean. So he went to a forest and sat under an Aswatha tree, resolving never to get out of that place till he got Realization of the Truth.

#### Enlightenment

It was then that Kamadeva or Mara came to tempt him in different ways. He knew that Gautama was sitting there with a good lot of determination and if he succeeded in getting Realization he would dispel ignorance and no body would pay tribute to Kamadeva. He asked his three sons, and three daughters, to try their best to distract his penance. The three sons were called confusion, gaiety and pride. The three daughters were lust, delight and thirst. These six people joined together and said, "We shall all go together and fight with this man". But he was not changed. He gathered all his forces and for a very long time the fight went on. He was not changed. Then all of them appeared before Mara and said, "There is no use

wasting our energy. He is a determined person." Then Mara left Gautama.

The result was Gautama soon got enlightenment and became a Buddha. He understood the reason for all kinds of miseries. What made him renounce this world was the sight of old age, disease and death. He wanted to find what was the best way of getting rid of them. He solved that problem. Then He decided to come out and impart instructions to various people. Then he went from under the Bodhi tree to Benares. On the way he had to cross the Ganges. It is said that the ferry man wanted money, but Buddha replied that he had no money. Not being taken into the ferry, Buddha flew over the Ganges and went to the other side. And this news reached Bimbisara, the King of that place, and he decided never more to collect any toll from people who crossed the Ganges.

Buddha then went to another place where he saw his old five ascetics. They saw him from a pretty long distance and then they thought "if this man comes, we will refuse to join him" but when he came near them, they were completely changed because there was the radiance of Self-realization coming out of him and they fell at his feet. That was the nucleus of the band of Sishyas that gathered round him. These five became monks under him. He then preached his Buddhism the midgote Path, and on his 80th year he passed away. That is the life of Buddha. Now let us briefly examine the teachings of Buddhism.

#### Teachings of Buddha

We have to study Buddhism from 41 points of view, from the ethical point of view, and the philosophical point of view. It is a composite of ethical principles. All these principles were introduced for the purpose of solving the problem of human misery which could be got rid of. How best to adapt one's conduct so as to escape

the evils in the form of human miseries? And they constituted the ethical side of Buddhism. Philosophically, it is an approach for the solution of the riddle of life. Why should man suffer? Why should he be born? All these questions point to the final question: How to escape misery? By escaping birth. When you are born, you are bound to have misery. How to escape birth? By giving up the desire to be born. The desire for birth arises on account of the reaction of the mind to the pleasures of the world. Therefore ascetic desires. That is the way of getting rid of rebirth. That is the kind of philosophical approach to it.

Then the question of the philosophy of Advaita was taken up. What was Buddha's attitude to Supreme Being? He did not say anything at all. He did not want to say whether there is Parabrahman or no Parabrahman or whether there is Saguna Brahman or Nirguna Brahman, whether or not gods are the personifications of powers. These questions he did not want to take up. This is seen from the fact that the Buddhist records give us an idea of the philosophy which was prevalent then and believed in by a number of people.

#### Dialogues

They are called Buddha's dialogues, and one of the dialogues speaks about a certain person Malunkya Putra having conducted a conversation with Buddha. He had been initiated into the monastic order by Buddha himself and he was living to the Jetavana monastery at Sravasti. He was a member there and he was listening the teaching of Buddha for a long time but this doubt arose in his mind. 'Buddha has not taught us many things. He has not elucidated very many points, and unless he elucidates the points and makes us understand these things, there is no point in my living with him and remaining within the monastery.'

And therefore, he said, "O, Enlightened One, you have not told us answers to three questions and till I can hear the answers to these three questions I cannot have peace. On the other hand, if you refuse to give answers, I shall leave the monastery and relapse once again into my old life." Then he asks "First of all, is the world finite or infinite permanent or temporary, eternal or non eternal? Secondly, is the body separate from the soul or not or both are identical? Thirdly, when a great saint dies, does he completely die or does he exist even after death? Unless you explain these three points I will go back to my old life."

Buddha answered 'I have not explained these because it is not necessary that you should know them' He does not say anything about the world 'These are not to be known without practising religion. We practise religion for the purpose of ending miseries. Therefore, the knowledge of answers to your questions is not going to solve this problem. Have I not given you all the methods of ending all miseries? There is no need to know about these things. Do not ask such questions.' That was the way he disposed of the philosophical questions.

There was an ascetic called Vasishta and he was having a conversation with Buddha. He had a doubt about Brahman itself. Buddha replied 'Vedas speak about Brahman. Rishis have written about Brahman. But have you seen anybody who has seen Brahman?' He replied, 'No.' 'Then what is the use of asking whether there is Brahman or not? I have told you that the best way of getting rid of misery is to follow the Eightfold Path.' The people were satisfied. That shows clearly that Buddha did not want to discuss about philosophy. He wanted people to regulate their conduct to get rid of misery. Buddha laid emphasis on the practical aspect

of all religions. So he asked man to follow the Middle Path. He said that he was merely giving them an idea of the noble Eightfold Path.

### Ethical Outlook

He did not lay emphasis on theory. His teaching was a composite of ethical principles. His approach to philosophy was only from the practical point of view. He believed in the theory of Karma. There is no use blaming fate for one's own suffering and there is no use blaming God. There is no use blaming the devil. One has to blame oneself alone and the Karma that he does brings about results. So birth and death are brought about. And the best thing to do is to regulate one's life in such a way that Karma does not affect a person and bring about his re-incarnation. He also wanted to give an ideal to the people. That was Nirvana.

One attains painless peace Santi, where there is no desire. That is one way of translating Nirvana. Another translation is the extinction of the self so that it completely merges itself in the Paramatman or Infinite Being. That is the Jiva getting into Paramatman. The third translation is no extinction completely. Whatever be the state of Nirvana, it is a state where one transcends all miseries and that ideal is reached by following several things. These are actually instructions as to how a man should lead a life so that misery can be avoided and for that there is a technique. He established a law of Dharma and founded a Sangha. He speaks about four meditations, the four-fold struggle against evil, the four roads leading to sainthood, the three foldies (Tejas) or Siddhis which you can attain. Then he speaks about the five more powers. Then seven kinds of wisdom and the eight-fold path. These are the technical details of Buddhism.

### Meditations

What are the four kinds of meditations? I shall give you an idea of these--The four great meditations are the first great meditation is the meditation upon the body to understand that it is only perishable and that you should not attach much importance to it. The second great meditation is the meditation on the senses to find out how they are driving us towards all kinds of evil things. The third great meditation is meditation on ideas, how conceptions are formed. And lastly the great meditation on reason and character. How do we reason out the relation between cause and effect and on the way of building up character. So if you develop the practice of meditating upon the body, the senses, the ideas and the character and the reason, the four great meditations are practised.

There are four ways of fighting evil. This is the original Buddhism which was preached by Buddha himself. First of all there must be prevention of evil coming before us. See no evil. Talk no evil. Hear no evil. That is the first struggle, the great struggle that you have to put forth in preventing any evil from coming into you.

The second struggle is the removal of evil that is already there. The third is to create good where there is no good in us. The fourth is to improve the good already in us.

The four great meditations are the four great struggles for putting an end to evils and increasing virtues. If you increase virtue, evil will go away.

### Way to Sainthood

Then come the four great roads leading to sainthood for the attainment of Siddhi. What are they? First of all, there must be the will to achieve greatness. You must determine that you are not going to be an ordinary person swayed by emotions that you will try to have the things necessary

for making yourself a saint. Then the will also must be combined with the four great meditations and the four great struggles. So will united with the four great meditations and the four great struggles is one of the roads--the development of the will.

The second thing is making the necessary exertion for the purpose of achieving the necessary sainthood. And there also you have to combine meditation and struggles.

The first is determining. The second is action. The third is preparing the heart for the purpose of strengthening itself to resist all kinds of temptations and so on. And lastly comes investigations into the scriptures and the methods that have been resorted to by the great saints, and utilizing also the four great meditations and the four great struggles.

### Moral Powers

When you attain the position of a saint you achieve certain powers which make you spiritually superior to other persons and free you from the obligation of being born again and again in the world. Then you have got the five moral powers. First is faith. It means Sraddha, which is the very source of strength, reverence, devotion and belief in the scriptures and in the sayings of great men. The second is energy, the third is thought, the fourth is contemplation, and the fifth is wisdom. These are the five Balas or moral powers.

The seven kinds of wisdom are energy, thought, contemplation, investigation of scriptures, joy, repose and serenity of conduct. These are the marks of wisdom in a wise man in the real wise man. The really wise man is most energetic. Though he may not be physically energetic, he is mentally energetic. Then, he will be very thoughtful. His thought will be clear and correct. Everything will be systematical. There will be no fallacy in his arguments.

He will always be contemplating upon the things that are happening. He will understand the weakness and strength of others in half a second. He will be thinking of everything that he observes.

Investigation into scriptures constitutes the Swadhyaya of Raja Yoga. Then you will have immense joy. Then repose. Then serenity will be the mark. So, these are the seven wisdoms. Then there is the Eightfold Path. The Eightfold Path is spoken of as the right view, right aspiration, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right contemplation and lastly right rapture. On a previous occasion I have explained this Eightfold Path. This is the way in which Buddha spread his teaching among those who followed him.

In the last days, Gautama's relation, Gautami, had taken to the life of a Bhikshu, and she wanted Gautama to give her a place and allow ladies also to become Sanyasins. Buddha said, "No." Twice or thrice he said, "No." Then Gautami went to a place where Gautama was. Then Ananda once again approached Buddha, and pleaded, 'Are women not entitled to enlightenment?' Ultimately he decided to take her provided she observed tea vows. He replied that she was prepared to observe the vows. Buddha said, 'But, I prophesy that if the ladies had not been admitted into the order, the new religion that I have founded would last for 1,000

years, but with the introduction of ladies, it will last only for 500 years.' And it happened exactly as he predicted. Buddhism was split up into two sections, Hinayana and Mahayana. And Mahayana was later on absorbed into Hinduism.

Now, why did such a great religion, which translated all principles into practice, pass away from our land, although it is still prevailing in Ceylon, Japan and South East Asia?

One reason was the splitting up of Buddhism into two parts, Hinayana and Mahayana. Another reason is Sankara came and dealt a death-blow to Buddhism. The third reason is that Islam was developing more and more and did away with all Buddhist universities. But the real reason was that Buddhism was not fundamentally different from Hinduism. It only laid emphasis on the practices which are to make a Hindu a proper Hindu. When you compare Raja Yoga with the various paths advocated by Buddhism, you will notice that it is Patanjali Yoga that is worked out into practice by these methods, the practice of meditation, etc. Therefore, people felt that it was not necessary to go away from their own traditional religion for accepting the teachings of Buddha. If now a spiritual aspirant has the longing to take up the discipline as it is laid down in Buddhist scriptures, then he will find that his spiritual progress will become very quick and effective.

### DIVINE LIFE

To lead the Divine Life is to annihilate the animal to man, to sublimate the human in him into the Divine, and to express this sublimation in his daily life. Life is a worship of the Immanent Spirit. As all beings share the same one Life which is the Whole end of which they are different parts, their development lies in their being in harmony with that Life. The perfection of the part is its unity with the Whole. Mutual love, understanding, reciprocation, and the performance of one's duty, understood in the right perspective, in perfect loyalty to the Whole, are the only means for the promotion of peace and smity, grand-will and prosperity, throughout the world.

—Swami Sivananda.

# "Shambalah"—Spiritual Communion

Rev. Robert E. Dickhoff, D.D.

(President, American Buddhist Society Inc New York)

Shambalah is not a City of Mystery located somewhere in Tibet or elsewhere, but Shambhal is Spiritual Communion for all Buddhists the world over. To bring about this universal communicant to its fullest Realization Full Moon, which comes every 28th day, has been selected since the day of the Lord Buddha as the chosen event for silent Prayer and Meditation to commemorate the Philosophy which became the light for millions living in Asia and later the world—Buddhism.

If you have been told differently as to the true meaning of Shambalah as being secret mysterious, disregard such misinformation coming from sources mostly antagonistic towards Buddhism.

The Buddhists have no secrets sell no secrets and make no secret commitments with anybody neither do Buddhists sign pacts today or any other day, in blood or other substances to appease earthly or metaphysical powers, hold mysterious seances practise magic of any other sort of inachievous hocus pocus or abracadabra, just because believers of other Faiths say so they disquising their own shortcomings.

This state of mind of peaceful tranquillity valued by the Buddhist and often referred to as 'Heaven' by others is not so far removed, that not all can feel its nearness and sweetnes here on earth, if the mind is properly tuned for Enlightenment and the world a synchronized oneness and sinlil ignorance has been temporarily removed. Once fear of man made hells has been successfully overcome it should not be so hard to have one a Heaven right here on earth and now.

The moon is like a heavenly clock, which summons and reminds all Buddhists to

gather for Shambalah to gain merit by meditating upon Siddhaitha Gautama, who became Buddha at the age of 40 and for 40 long earth years travelled all over India to teach his Philosophy of self enlightenment self discipline and self education. There are no restrictions for Buddhists to pray on any day during the year and in Tibet much merit is believably gained by carving Tibetan lettering on stone, on prayerflags which pronounce the holy words Om Mani Padme Hum—Hail Thou Jewel in the Lotus—a prayer originally directed to Shenszic Goddess of Mercy and Patron of Lhasa Tibet Buddhists follow the Noble Eightfold Path which is believed the surest way to perfect Attainment of Buddhahood They obey the Se Ba Thela or Ten Commandments

First—Thou shalt not take any life  
Second—Thou shalt not steal Third—Thou shalt not commit adultery Fourth—Thou shalt not lie Fifth—Thou shalt not drink intoxicating liquors

The other five commandments are confined to the conduct of the Priesthood. And remember that Lord Buddha admoot shows a certain Truth 'Whatever after personal experiance and investigation is bound to agree with your own reason and tends to serve your own well being and the well being of all other living beings—that cling to sa truth and shape your life in accordance therewith—'

Shambalah is also a gathering of Friends of the Dharma of Truth and as Lord Buddha puts it 'The eight of true friends allords joy. To live with them is happiness. Therefore, attach thyself to the wise to the Intelligent, the learned, the meek and live always as the moon in the company of the stars.'

Chapter Six

**JAINISM**

# Jainism

Sri Swami Sivananda

## Introduction

Jainism is a very ancient religion. It has much in common with Buddhism. It is a near relative of Buddhism.

The Jain theory is based on reason. It is based on right faith, right knowledge, right conduct, tempered with mercy.

Jainism is not a theistic system in the sense of the belief in the existence of God as the Creator and the Ruler of the world. The highest being in the Jain philosophy is a person and not a Being without attributes like the Brahman of the Vedanta.

'Jain' or more properly speaking 'Jaina' means a follower of Jina, which is applied to those persons who have conquered the lower nature, passion, hatred, etc. The word "Jato" comes from the word 'Jios' which means a conqueror. 'Jina' comes from the root "Ji"—"to conquer". It means conquering the passions. It does not mean conquering nations. The passions are considered as enemies of the soul. They faint the natural qualities of the soul. Obscure right belief cause also knowledge and wrong conduct. Lust, anger, pride, greed are considered as the major passions.

The chief point in the Jato creed is the reverence paid to holy men, who have raised themselves to divine perfection through long discipline. The Jina or the 'conquering saint' who has conquered all worldly desires is with Jains what the Buddha or the perfectly enlightened saint is with the Buddhists. He is also called Jineswars (chief of the Jinas). Arhat 'the venerable', Tirthankars or the saint who has made the passage of the world. Sisavajras (omniscient), Bhagewata (holy

one). 'Tirtha' literally means a ford, a means of crossing over. It metaphorically denotes a spiritual guide or a system of philosophy which enables one to cross over the ocean of recurring birth and death in this world. 'Kara' means "one who makes". The word "Tirthakara" means a Jain Holy Teacher.

According to the belief of the Jatis, only the omniscient are able to give the right code or rules of life. These teachers or Tirthakaras are not creators or rulers of the world. They are pure divine souls who have attained perfection. They never again take human birth.

Mahavira is not the founder of Jainism. He revived the Jato doctrines. He was more a reformer than the founder of the faith. He was the first active propagator. He was the twenty fourth Tirthankara. He is claimed to have been omniscient. 'Maha' means 'great' and 'Vira' means a hero'. Parashvanath was the twenty third. The first of these twenty four was Rishabha Dev.

Time is divided into cycles. In each half cycle, twenty-four Tirthankaras at long intervals preach soev the Jain doctrines.

Time proceeds in two eternally recurring cycles of immense duration depending all human calculation. These are: (1) Uttarapini or the ascending cycle, and (2) Avantarapini or the descending cycle. Each of these has six stages.

The idols which represent the Tirthankaras are like that of the Buddha in a meditative posture.

There are two classes of Jains, viz., Sravakas, or those who engage in secular occupations and Yatis (monks or ascetics or Sadhus), who shave their heads, who

live in monasteries. The monks abandon all worldly connections. They take life-long vows of absolute renunciation.

The Jains are still found in great numbers chiefly in Bombay, Gujarat, Kathiawar, Siro Marwar Rajputana, Punjab, Central India, Uttarapradesh, Bengal and South India. Jain monks are divided into two principal sects, viz., the Svetambaras (clothed in white garments) and the Digambaras (sky clad or naked). The number of Jains is 1,450,000.

#### Joint Philosophy

The Jain philosophy bases its doctrine on the absolute necessity of conquering the lower nature for the realization of Truth.

The Jains do not accept the authority of the Vedas.

Jainism divides the whole universe into two main divisions, viz., sentient beings (Chetana also called Jiva or Soul) and non-sentient things (Jada also called Ajiva or non soul). Soul is that element which thinks, knows and feels. It is the divine element in the living being. The true nature of the soul is right knowledge, right faith and right conduct. The soul is undergoing evolution and involution, so long as it is subject to transmigration. Whatever is inert is non soul (Ajiva).

The combination of the Jiva and the Ajiva causes all diversities in this universe. Their interaction or interplay is the cause of the world process or evolution. When the soul is stripped of all its Ajiva baggage, it becomes pure and attains its ultimate Mukti.

There are five gateways of knowledge. The first is the senses. There is only one sense—the sense of touch in the lowest form of life. There are two, three, four and five senses in higher forms of life. The second source is study. The third is

Avadhi of the psychic faculty through which more subtle things are known. The fourth is mind, knowing by which the mental processes of others are known. The fifth is Absolute Knowledge.

The Jain canon is divided into two parts viz., (1) Shruti Dharma, i.e., philosophy, and (2) Charitra Dharma, ethics. The Shruti Dharma enquires into the nature of nine principles, six kinds of living beings and four states of existence. The nine principles are soul (Jiva) and non soul (Ajiva), merit on account of which man is happy, demerit, on account of which man suffers from misery. The fifth is the state which brings in merit and demerit. The sixth is Samvara which stops the follow of foreign energies. The seventh is destruction of actions. The eighth is hoodage of soul with actions. The ninth is total and permanent freedom of soul from all actions.

Dharma is that which keeps the soul from falling downwards. The bonds which keep it attached to this universe are those of Karma—virtuous and evil actions.

The four states of existence are Devas (celestial beings), Manushyas (human beings), Tiryancha (other human, vegetables, animals, birds etc.) and Naraka (the lowest state of existence, that of being a denizen of hell).

Living beings are of six kinds viz., the non-organized (having body only) i.e. fire, air, water, earth and vegetable; the two organized (having body and taste); the three organized (having body, taste and smell); the four-organized (having body, taste, smell and sight); the five-organized (having body, taste, smell, sight and hearing). The last one comprises of animals and human beings.

The six kinds of living beings are divided into six classes—earth-body beings, water-body beings, fire-body beings, wind-body beings and vegetables—all of them having one organ of sense, that of

touch, and lastly, animals. The animals are again divided into four classes — beings having two organs of sense, those of touch and of taste such as tape worms, leeches, etc., beings having three organs of sense, those of taste, touch and smell, such as ants, lice, etc., beings having four organs of sense, those of touch, taste, smell and sight, such as bees, scorpions, etc.; beings having five organs of sense, those of touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing. These are human beings, animals, birds, men and gods. All these living beings have four, or six of the following capacities — capacity of taking food, capacity of constructing body, capacity of co-constructing organs, capacity of respiration, capacity of speaking and the capacity of thinking. Beings having one organ of sense, i.e., of touch, have the first four capacities. Beings having two, three and four organs of sense, have the first five capacities, while those having five organs have all the six capacities.

### God

Jainism does not regard God as a Creator. God in the sense of an extra cosmic personal Creator has no place in the Jain philosophy. But there is a subtle essence underlying all substances, conscious and unconscious, which becomes the cause of all modifications. This is termed God. The Jain idea of Godhood is the perfected soul (Siddha) or the liberated soul (Mukta). The Jains worship these liberated souls (Tirthankaras), who have destroyed all Karmas and attained salvation, as their gods. They accept those enlightened souls who have abandoned all worldly connections who lead the life of true Sadhus, who have controlled all selfish desires, as their spiritual teachers. They accept that only as the true religion, which is promulgated by them.

### Tirthankaras

The Jain Tirthankara is free from faults

He is called a God. He is the knower of all things and the revealer of Dharma. He is free from the 18 kinds of blemishes viz., hunger, thirst, sensibility, disease, birth, death, fear, pride, attachment, aversion, infatuation, worry, conceit, hatred, nosiness, sweat, sleep and surprise.

### Jiva-Ajiva (Soul, Non-soul)

That which knows is soul. That which does not know is non-soul. Jiva and Ajiva have no origin. They have been in existence in the past. They exist now. They will exist in future also. We cannot say when the combination of the two has taken place. They have been found intermingled from time immemorial. Jives and Ajivas are innumerable. Souls are infinite. Each soul retains its individuality. Each soul has to take births and rebirths till it destroys all its Karmas. Through right knowledge, right perception, right conduct and self-control or penance, the bonds of accumulated Karmas can be loosened and annihilated.

**Jiva (Soul)** Jives, the living beings or souls are classified under two headings, (1) Siddha or the liberated, and Samsari or the worldly beings.

Living souls are of three kinds, viz., (1) Nitya Siddha (ever perfect) as the Jive (2) Mukta-tma (liberated soul) and (3) Bandhatma (bound soul). Samsari is one who is bound by works and worldly associations.

The Jain philosophy teaches that each soul is a separate individuality, uncreated and eternal in existence. It has lived from time immemorial in some embodied state. It evolves from the lower to the higher condition through the Law of Karma or cause and effect. It takes fresh bodies after death so long as the Karmas or forces generated in previous lives have not been fully worked out. Eventually it unfolds its absolute purity by breaking the bonds of Karma and attains perfection, Nirvana.

or Mukti. The individuality is not merged into anything. It is not annihilated also. It attains right realization, right knowledge and right life. The perfected soul is neither masculine, nor feminine, nor neuter.

Every soul is potentially omniscient. Consciousness is the very nature of the soul. Soul is a pure embodiment of knowledge. The soul has infinite potentialities. It has infinite capacity for removing Karma bondages.

*Ajna* (non soul) There are five main sub divisions viz., Dharmastikaya (that substance which helps soul and matter to move), Adharmastikaya (that substance which helps the soul or matter to rest), Akasasti or the space, (that substance which gives shelter to the living and the non living), Kala (time) and Pudgala (matter).

### World

Jainism has two ways of looking at things one called Dravyarthi Kanaya and the other Paryayarthi Kanaya. According to the Dravyarthi Kanaya view, the world is without beginning and end but according to the Paryayarthi Kanaya view, there is creation and destruction at every moment.

The Jaina affirm that being formed of eternal atoms the universe has existed and will exist eternally.

They believe that it has three divisions, viz., lower, middle and upper. They believe that there are numerous hells and heavens. In metaphysics that which is real is called 'Dravya' (substance).

The world is beginningless and endless. There is no extra cosmic creator or ruler of the world. There are six real substances which constitute the world. These six are space, time, matter, souls, Dharmastikaya (inherent of motion) and Adharmastikaya (inherent of stability, or rest). Space serves as a receptacle for the other substances. It is infinite. Time is real. It is

beginningless and endless. Material objects consist of atoms.

There is nothing in the world save substance. There are many kinds of substances. Existence cannot be separated from substance.

### Doctrine of Karma

The only enemy of the soul is the force of its own Karma (actions). It can destroy the Karma by becoming fully self-conscious. When the bonds of Karma are destroyed the soul attains Mukti. It cannot be overcome afresh by Karma.

Every bound soul is under the influence of eight kinds of forces or Karmas --

(i) *Jnanavaraniya*, the knowledge-obstructing force or the Karma which acts as an impediment to the knowledge of truth.

(ii) *Darsanavaraniya*, the perception-obstructing force or the Karma which acts as an impediment to the right insight.

(iii) *Vedaniya* the force that regulates the experiences of pleasure and pain.

(iv) *Mohaniya*, which produces bewilderment in two kinds viz.

(a) *Darsana mohaniya* which stands in the way of the adoption of the right faith. Prejudice, bigotry, false beliefs, passions and emotions which deprive one of the proper exercise of the power of reflection, which is indispensable for the knowledge of Truth, come under this heading.

(b) *Charitra mohaniya*, which prevents one from following the right path (religion). In practice Anger, pride, deceit, covetousness, joking, attachment, laziness which destroy determination and serenity and prevent concentration, come under this heading.

(c) *Ayuh* the force which determines the duration of the association of the soul with its physical body.

(iv) *Nama* or the group of forces which organize the body and its limbs.

(vii) *Gotra*, the force which attracts the soul into a new womb upon which the Gotra (family or lineage) of the individual depends.

(viii) *Antaraya*, the force which limits the powers and effectiveness of the soul.

The soul is not able to attain perfection on account of the obstruction caused by the eight kinds of forces.

These eight main kinds of forces comprise 148 minor sub-divisions known as Karma Prakritis or energies of Karma. Of these, the first, second, fourth and the eighth kind of forces are called 'Ghatis' or destructive, because they stand in the way of the soul's attaining perfection.

The doctrine of Karma occupies a very prominent place in the Jain philosophy. Punya is the effect of virtuous deeds (Snbha Karma). Papa is the effect of evil deeds (Asubha Karma). If a man has abundance of good actions, his happiness increases; if he has abundance of evil deeds, his miseries and pain increase. When both the good and evil deeds are eliminated, he attains emancipation or Moksha.

The doctrine of Karma is the companion doctrine of the transmigration of the soul. "With what measure you meet, it shall be measured to you again." "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall be also reaped." That is how the Jains indicate the Law of Karma. This solves the problem of the inequality and seeming injustice in the world. A student of Jain Karma philosophy can trace any effect to a particular Karma. Those who by right faith, right knowledge and right conduct, destroy all Karmas, attain perfection. They become divine and are called Jinas. Those Jinas who, in every age, preach the law and establish the order, are called Tirthankaras.

Karma is an energy which the Jiva generates and which binds him to this world or Samsara. Bad Karmas (Papa)

keep the Jiva in a backward condition. Righteous deeds (Punya) help him in his spiritual advancement. Asrava is the inflow of Karma. The Jiva is attracted by Karmas. Karma particles enter the Jiva just as water enters a vessel through any leak. The inflow of Karma can be stopped, just as the leak in the vessel is stopped. This is called Samvara. The Karmas can be entirely worked out. This is pumping out the incoming flow of Karma. This is called Nirjara. If the Jiva does not make serious attempt to stop the inflow of Karma particles, he is bound by Karma. He is in a state of bondage. The Karma particles get assimilated with the individual (Bandha or bondage). The ultimate state of a perfected individual is Moksha, wherein there is complete separation or elimination of Karma from the Jiva.

The soul is combined with gross and subtle matter. If the soul gets rid of all this foreign element, it attains perfection, blissfulness, knowledge, and immortality. This stage is reached by mental and moral discipline, right belief, right knowledge and right conduct. Right belief, right knowledge and right conduct are called the triple jewels.

#### Doctrine of Reincarnation

The Jains believe in reincarnation. The doctrine of reincarnation alone can explain the inequality seen in the world. Why is one man born rich and the other poor? Why is one man healthy and strong and another man weak and unhealthy? Why one man lives for 30 years, and another for 85 years? Why one man is a king and another a labourer in the field? What is the cause of this apparent injustice? Karma. Good Karmas give good birth. Evil Karmas give rise to low births. The doctrine of reincarnation is another grand doctrine of the Jain philosophy. It is the companion doctrine of the doctrine of Karma.

### Triple Jewels

Right faith, right knowledge and right conduct constitute the path to Nirvana. Wrong beliefs, wrong knowledge and wrong conduct prolong the bondage of the soul. The belief that the Jain Tirthankaras are the true Gods, the Jain Sastras the true scriptures and the Jain saints the true Preceptors is called the Right Faith.

Right Faith, or right belief has eight Angas or limbs. Unshakable faith in the Jain Siddhanta is the first limb called Nishankita Anga.

Entertaining no desire for sensual enjoyment knowing it to be fleeting and the seed of sin, and thinking that there is great trouble in the attainment of sensual objects, is the second limb known as Nishankshita.

To love the virtues for their excellent divine attributes without feeling disgust for their bodies is the third limb of right faith called Nirvichikitsita.

Non recognition of the authority of false creeds and of those who are established therein is the fourth limb called Amnadrishiti Anga.

To remove the criticism raised by ignorant and incompetent persons on Jainism is the fifth Anga known as Upachubana. To intensify the faith in those who are wavering in the right faith or conduct is the sixth Anga called Sthitikarana. Entertaining love and proper respect for one's co-religionists is the seventh limb known as Vatsalya. To establish the glory of the Jain Siddhanta by removing the dark clouds of ignorance is the eighth Anga known as Prabhavana. Right faith leads to all kinds of prosperity and eventually also to eternal bliss.

There are four difficulties—(1) It is difficult to get a human life. (2) It is difficult to come across true spiritual teaching. (3) It is difficult to have faith in the teaching. (4) It is difficult to practise the teaching.

**Right Knowledge** Right knowledge reveals the nature of things as it is and with certainty. It comprises Prashamana Yoga Karanau Yoga, Charanu Yoga and Dravyanu Yoga. Prashamana Yoga deals with Dharma (religion), Artha (wealth), Kama (enjoyment) and Moksha (salvation) of the soul. Karanau Yoga enables one to perceive as if in a mirror the divisions of space, the changes of time, and the four conditions of life. Charanu Yoga deals with conduct. Dravyanu Yoga throws clear light on Tatwas, viz., Jiva, Ajiva etc., virtue, vice, bonds, & emancipation. It amplifies the knowledge derived from meditation or study.

**Right Conduct (Jain ethics)** That noble soul who has right knowledge on account of right faith begins to practise the rules of right conduct, to attain the state of desirelessness by eradicating likes and dislikes, which destroy the five kinds of sin viz., Himsa (injury), falsehood, theft, unchastity and attachment to mundane objects.

Right conduct is of two kinds viz., Sakala (perfect) which is observed by the ascetics and Vikala (imperfect) which is practised by the laymen. The layman takes vows not to do gross forms of injury. The monk carries them out in their strict sense.

The universal principles of Jainism are Ahimsa (non-injury), Satya (truthfulness), Asteya (non-stealing), Brahmacharya (celibacy) and Aparigraha (non-covetousness). This corresponds to the Yamas of the Raja Yoga of Patanjali. Maharsht Jainism preaches universal brotherhood, equality of all beings. It enjoins on all its followers the practice of the greatest self control.

The five Mahavratas or great commandments for Jain ascetics are—not to kill, i.e., to protect all life, not to lie, not to take that which is not given, to abstain from sexual intercourse, to renounce all

interest in worldly things particularly in  
call nothing one's own

The Jain doctrines are summed up in  
the maxim "Ahimsa Paramo Dharma." Non-injury to living beings is the highest  
religious Ahimsa is the foundational tenet  
of Jainism Jainism always tends to protect  
and advance the interests of all kinds of  
living beings.

One should not kill, tell lies, steal, be  
unchaste or over greedy for the possession  
of property This constitutes Jain ethics.  
The Jains are vegetarians.

Strict Jains practise Ahimsa to an ex-  
treme degree They strain water before  
drinking, sweep the ground with a brush be-  
fore treading on it They never eat or drink  
in the dark They finish their meals before  
sunset They sometimes wear muslin  
over their mouths to prevent the risk of  
swallowing minute insects.

All the rules of conduct are based on  
Daya (mercy) Daya has four forms  
(1) performing kind acts without expecta-  
tion of returns, (2) rejoicing at the  
prosperity of others, (3) sympathy with  
distressed people and relieving their afflic-  
tions, and (4) pity for the criminal.

According to the Jain philosophy, all  
evils are due to Raga-Dvesha (attachment  
and hatred) The Raja Yoga philosophy of  
Patanjali Maharsi, the Nyaya philosophy

and Vedanta also say the same thing.  
Attachment produces Moha or infatuation.  
Moha causes entanglement Separation  
from the loved object causes pain and  
suffering Through Dvesha man injures  
others Attachment also is as much  
an evil as hatred Both are causes of  
bondage Both taint the mind

### Moksha

Moksha is the total elimination of Karma  
from the Jiva The Jiva gets freedom as  
soon as it attains this stage The liberated  
state is known as Mukti The Jiva attains  
perfect, unlimited, eternal happiness un-  
touched by cares and worries Moksha  
implies freedom from matter The liberated  
soul goes to the abode called Siddhakshetra,  
which is at the top of this world.

The individual by his own efforts  
liberates all his latent qualities which were  
obscured by foreign elements (Karmas)  
This state of purity or perfection is  
attained only in the human life through  
the triple jewels, viz., right faith, right  
knowledge and right conduct.

The soul becomes pure by the removal  
of matter In this condition there are no  
pain, misery, disease, old age, death,  
fatigue, discomfort It is a condition  
of immortality, infinite knowledge, and  
eternal, uninterrupted bliss.

## Jaina Concept of Soul

To an embodied soul, desire and aversion will naturally occur On account of  
these states Karmic matter clings to the living being The Karmic bondage leads the  
living being through the four states of existence (sub human in the heavens, or  
to the hells) Entering into the state of existence the living being builds its own  
appropriate body, and being embodied he gets the senses Through the senses, objects  
in the environment are perceived, from perception comes desire or aversion towards  
those objects, and from desire the cycle begins again But the cycle ends in the case  
of those who will attain liberation, whereas it is unending to those who will not But it  
has no beginning to either case Thus is it taught by the conqueror of embodied  
existence

# Jaina Sayings

Collected by Sri Swami Sivananda

1 Surely the disappearance of attachment and dispassion is Ahimsa (non injury). Their appearance is Himsa (injury). This is the summary of the Jain scriptures.

2 The five vows of Jainism are to refrain from taking life falsehood stealing sexual intercourse and to renounce all worldly passions.

3 Control anger by forgiveness vanity by humility fraud by straightforwardness, and greed by contentment.

4 Do not kill living beings in any of the three ways by mind, word or deed.

5 One becomes a monk by equanimity, a Brahmana by celibacy, a sage by wisdom and a hermit by penance.

6 Six essential duties have been prescribed for a saint, viz., repentance renunciation praising the Lord, obeisance to the Lord, practising equanimity and relinquishment of attachment to body.

7 Right belief, right knowledge and right conduct—these together constitute the path to Moksha or the final emancipation.

8 By right knowledge one knows the right things by faith one believes in them, by right conduct one checks the influx of Karma and by penance one becomes pure.

9 Harmlessness is the only religion.

10 One must worship God, serve the Guru (preceptor), study the scriptures, control the senses, perform austerities and give alms.

11 Attachment and aversion are caused by Karma. Karma has its origin in delusion. Karma is the root of birth and death. Birth and death are miseries.

12 Just as when a seed is totally burnt no sprout comes forth so also when the

seed in the form of Karma is burnt there is no more worldly existence.

13 Again and again it should be reflected considered attentively and pondered that everything is transitory, subject to change. Attachment to things should be abandoned.

14 He is a Brahmana who practises penance observes vows and has perfect peace of mind.

15 There is no escape from the effect of one's actions. Every deed will bear its fruits.

16 Right belief, right knowledge and right conduct are the source of happiness.

17 Gambling, eating meat, wine, bribing, debauchery, adultery, hunting, thieving—these seven things in this world lead to hell.

18 Those who wish to avoid Himsa (injury) should renounce wine and flesh and control anger.

19 Not to injure is the first of virtues.

20 The slave to his lust has forfeited human life and divine life.

21. Birth is misery, old age is misery, and so are disease and death. Ah! Nothing but misery is the Samsara, earthly life, in which men suffer distress.

22 Wisdom recognises the truth of the law.

23 One should respect the vow of truthfulness by always avoiding jesting, greed, cowardice and anger, by thinking before speaking.

24 Religion is the highest of all blessings. It comprises non injury, self control and austerities. Even the gods bow down to him whose mind is always centred in religion.

# Jaina Sutras

Translated from Prakrit by Hermann Jacobi

He who knows one thing, knows all things, and he who knows all things, knows one thing.

He who conquers one passion, conquers many; and he who conquers many, conquers 'the one.'

Kicking the misery of the world, rejecting the connexion with the world, the heroes go on the great journey; they tire gradually; they do not desire life.

Faithful according to the commandments of the Tathankaras, wise, and understanding the world according to the commandment, such a man is without danger from anywhere.

He who knows wrath, knows pride; he who knows pride, knows deceit; he who knows deceit, knows greed; he who knows greed, knows love; he who knows love, knows hate; he who knows hate, knows delusion; he who knows delusion, knows conception; he who knows conception, knows birth; he who knows birth, knows death.

Therefore, a wise man should avoid wrath, pride, deceit, greed, love, hate, delusion, conception, birth and death.

### The Five Vows

The five vows of a Jaina monk are -

I renounce all killing of living beings, whether subtle or gross, whether movable or immovable; nor shall myself kill living beings, nor cause others to do it, nor consent to it. As long as I live, I confess

and blame, repent and exempt myself of these sins, in the thrice threefold way, in mind, speech and body.

I renounce all vices of lying speech arising from anger or greed or fear or mirth. I shall neither myself speak lies, nor cause others to speak lies, nor consent to the speaking of lies by others. I confess and blame, repent and exempt myself of these sins in the thrice threefold way, in mind, speech and body.

I renounce all taking of anything not given, either in a village or in a town or in a forest, either of little or much, of small or great, of living or lifeless things. I shall neither take myself what is not given, nor cause others to take it, nor consent to their taking it. As long as I live, I confess and blame, repent and exempt myself of these sins in the thrice threefold way, in mind, speech and body,

I renounce all sexual pleasures, I shall not give way to sensuality, nor cause others to do it, nor consent to it. As long as I live, I confess and blame, repent and exempt myself of these sins, in the thrice threefold way, in mind, speech and body.

I renounce all attachments, whether little or much, small or great, living or lifeless, neither shall I myself form such attachments, nor cause others to do so, nor consent to their doing so. As long as I live, I confess and blame, repent and exempt myself of these sins, in the thrice threefold way, in mind, speech and body."

Where there is neither pain, nor pleasure, nor annoyance, nor any obstruction, nor death, nor birth, there only is Nirvana. Where there are neither sensas, nor is there any calamity, nor delusion, nor astonishment, nor sleep, nor desire, nor hunger, there only is Nirvana.

*(Niyamasara, 178-78)*

# Mahavira—The Prophet of Ahimsa

Sri R. R. Divalkar

(Governor of Bihar)

The birthday of Mahavira is celebrated annually throughout India by all Jains. Others too are invited to participate in the public functions held on the occasion. His is one of the great names in the history of faiths and creeds that India has given birth to. Today however, his name is mainly associated with the doctrine of Ahimsa which is the cardinal principle of the Jain cult. He may be said to be the first prominent apostle of non-violence in the history of human thought and human behaviour.

One has to fling oneself back twenty-four centuries from today to see Mahavira rising from a Kshatriya clan as a rebel and a protestant against certain aspects of Hinduism of those days. Buddha, another great protestant, was his contemporary for about a quarter of a century. The fact that two great minds thought it necessary to rebel against the then current Hinduism shows that evils had grown to enormous proportions and that they had become intolerable. Both of them were unique personalities and they laid stress on different aspects of religion. Two distinct philosophies have been built round their teachings. They were however at one in one thing namely the defiance of the cult of animal sacrifice that had by that time deteriorated into lustful orgies, and the daintiness of the caste ridden, ritualistic code of conduct that predominated in those days.

## A Living Cult

Both did play a historic role in reforming and reorientating Hinduism. Certain tenets of Buddhism not only ruled in India for centuries but spread throughout South-

East Asia and left its permanent impress on China and Japan. Later, Buddhism was wiped out of the mainland of India. But before it disappeared it affected Hinduism to a great extent and Buddha found a place in the Hindu pantheon as one of the incarnations of Vishnu. While that was the fate of Buddhism Jainism is still the living cult of about a million and a half Indians. It must be said to the credit of the followers of Mahavira that their influence on Indian life and affairs, especially in certain sectors of activity, far outweighs their tiny numbers. While this is the situation at present it is equally true that in the past, Jainism had great influence on the literatures of the South. The *Jeevaka Chintamani* in Tamil with 400 incomparable aphorisms is still a classic. The poems of Tiruvalluvar and Avvaiyar are even now well-known. Telugu also owes a lot to Jain poets. In Kannada, the first Maha-Kavyas like *Ajitanancharaya* of Ranna and others were composed by Jain poets. Not to the contribution of Jainism to the architecture and sculpture of India by any means negligible. In addition to all these things Mahavira and Buddha may be said to have been the first to carry religion and great religious ideas to the masses in their own language, the Ardhamagadhi and the Pali, respectively. That perhaps was the secret of creating a great enthusiasm for the new teaching and of rousing the spirit of the people to new activities in various fields of human endeavour.

While not intending to deal with the various aspects and influences of Jainism, it is better that I concentrate on only one thing, namely, the lesson of Ahimsa that

Mahavira taught with such remarkable success.

### Lesson of Ahimsa

Ahimsa has been a great idea and has a long history behind it. The last word on it has not been said nor has it been acted upon fully and logically with all its implications. Gandhiji, however, took it up, read new meaning to it and raised it to heights where it stands now to the great surprise of some and to the admiration of all great thinkers. If we really wish to understand the full significance of the doctrine, we have to link up its history right from Mahavira and his predecessor Teerthankaras to Gandhiji and his writings and actions. It is only then that a full history can be written of this teaching which seems today the only solution for the present state of affairs to the world.

It is true that some Western writers like Mrs Stevenson in 'The Heart of Jainism,' either out of ignorance or out of missionary zeal or out of a sense of superiority complex put this teaching down as a negative one. They consider the Ahimsic practices of the Jains as merely ceremonial and not moral. They ridicule the idea that any animals except human beings can have 'souls.' But it must be remembered that ideas such as, the world was created six thousand years ago or that the whole creation is for man, are unscientific and obsolete. Those who believe in such ideas at any rate have no right to preach religion or morals to people who know that life exists everywhere and that the age of the earth has to be counted in millions of years!

At the same time, those who think that Jainism has said the last word on Ahimsa or that Mahavira was the last prophet are equally committing a mistake. The idea, to my mind is still active and dynamic, and like radio active substances,

is capable of fresh interpretation and action. That is the reason why Gandhiji was able to fill the word with the new life-giving meaning and rouse millions to epic action.

### Not a Negative Force

The word is no doubt, negative in form. Ahimsa is 'no killing.' It was natural that when the air and the mind was full of killing and destroying life abstinence from it gave rise to a word which was negative. But neither the idea nor the action stopped there. Thinkers and wise men soon found that if really 'no killing' was to be achieved, 'non-injury' was necessary. But then that was only a physical abstinence. Unless the mind also desisted from thoughts of killing and injury, it was not possible to restrain killing. Thus non-killing and non-injury in thought, word and deed were enjoined. This meant that the very idea of hatred or enmity of any kind has no place to the mind of one who wishes to practise Ahimsa.

But all this, one would say, is negative. Ahimsa does not stop here at all. In fact, this is all a preparation for the realization of the positive aspect of Ahimsa, namely the steady and permanent leading of humanity with all sentient beings. It is not only the Upanishads and the Gita that say that one should look upon all life as one. A great Jain poet and teacher has said that one who has realized the self-sameness of the soul attains salvation, be he a Jaina or a non-faith. Jainism emphasizes that Bhava-himsa, that is, wishing death or injury, or with holding or coming in the way of the improvement or advance of anybody is more culpable than mere Dravya-himsa, that is, injury to or destruction of the material body.

Thus if one traces the very interesting

history of Ahimsa, it has developed from a simple abstinence from killing to the grand conception of identity of interest with all living beings. It was Gandhiji's genius that discovered that this doctrine was not only good for saints and philosophers but also for the whole of human society. In fact, he said that but for this, humanity would perish. In spite of death, life persists and that is because of the law

of Ahimsa. He travelled the whole country to teach Ahimsa for the specific purpose of winning freedom from powerful but unwilling hands. All this that he actually brought about and much more that he thought and wrote, has to be studied in this historical perspective of the evolution of Ahimsa. Then only shall we realize what great seed was sown by Mahavira.

## Analects of Jaina Scriptures

Collected by Sri Swami Sivananda

May He abide always within my heart, the Supreme Self, the one God of all gods, transcending all "this world's" ephemera, who is reachable by deepest meditation. They who have passed beyond all egos and doubts and false attachments of this world, they only can behold. If purity the Supreme Self and in It merge themselves. Who take their refuge in the Supreme Self, stainless beyond particularities, and fix their minds on it devotedly, unflinchingly they gain its Blessedness. (Amriti Catu)

There is no coming into existence without destruction; there is no destruction devoid of origination; neither origination nor destruction can truly be without stability. (Pravachanasara)

Difficult to conquer is oneself. But when that is conquered everything is conquered. (Uttaradhyayana Sutra)

Knowing the two-fold obstacles, bodily and mental, the wise ones, having thoroughly learned the law.....get rid of Karma. Subduing the passions and living on little food, they should endure hardships. If a mendicant falls sick let him take food. He should not long for life, nor wish for death; be shorn of yearn after either, life or death. (Aloranga Sutra)

Slaying, false speaking, theft, lust, greed to hold (things) as one's own exclusive property—to give up these and to walk well unto all: this is the essence of all virtuous vow. (Janarnava)

Mercy to living beings, self-restraint, truth, honesty, chastity, and contentment if right faith and knowledge, and austerity are but the entourage of morality. (Sif Prokrti)

He who is indifferent (detached) and wishes for the destruction of Karma, should continue his contemplation. Becoming unattached internally and externally, he should strive after absolute purity. Whatever means one knows for calming one's own life, that a wise man should learn in order to gain time for continuing practice. (Aloranga Sutra)

Thou that deservest every praise, the Lord of every glory. Thou, our God Supreme, we bow to Thee! Stainless, decayless, wondrous, exhaustless son of all marvels, the one, sole object of all hymns, who can be glimpsed but in the glass of solitary Consciousness that has negated all the taints of restless sins, disturbances, attachments to false fleeting things that stain Thy purity of peace. Thou refuge of the refugeless, Thou formless, formless, passionless, Lord of the

worlds, Thee we adore ! Most generous of givers, Thou give us that greatest gift of all—the luminous Intelligence and final Knowledge of Thyself give us this gift, we bow to Thee ! (Jaina Prayer)

All beings hate pains, therefore one should not kill anyone. This is the quintessence of wisdom not to kill anything (Sutra Kritanjo)

The Self doth lead itself to a new birth, by to Nirvana's freedom from such birth No other Master has the Self than Self (Samadhi Shatala)

Mundane soul is killed alone, is born alone, and alone becomes perfect after being liberated from Karmas (Aiyamasora)

Three staged is the path of souls. Each soul must pass through all successively First is the stage of vicious selfishness To it succeeds the time of virtuousness Last comes the stage free from all loves and hates and all personal desires. Thus last, the path lighted by duty only, helps the soul to break the bonds of sin and merit, too forged by the passions which imprison it and takes it across life's stormy sea. Give up the wish to earn merit for heaven nor dream of ever doing deeds of sin. Observe the rules prescribed for piety till the mind merges in the fountain and source of Purity. Bear patiently stages now high now low which fortune brings to thee. Guard watchfully against the errors of the mind. See that it falls not from noble to base mood Such is the only way to live with peace of mind and heart the life upon this earth Such is the essence of what Jine taught (Bhaga Chandra)

Without right faith there is no right knowledge without right knowledge there is no virtuous conduct, without virtues there is no deliverance, and without deliverance there is no perfection (Uttaradhyayana Sutra)

He alone sees the essence of Self the waters of whose mind stand still being ever undisturbed by the waves of love and hatred and their likes. To none else is this possible (Samadhi Shatala)

Thus we enjoin on you this do we say, thus we believe thus we proclaim to all. No living things should be slain anywhere, nor ordered forcibly this way or that, nor put in bonds, nor tortured any way, or treated violently otherwise because you are that same which ye would slay, or order here and there against his will, or put in prison or subject to pain, or treat with violence Ye are that same, the self-same like doth circulate in all (bhadra Bahu)

Right faith consists in believing in the true ideal scriptures and teacher. Such right faith is free from three follies has eight members and no pride. The three follies are (1) Worshipping with the desire of obtaining the favour of deities whose minds are full of personal likes and dislikes is called the folly of devotion to false divinity (2) Bathing in so called sacred rivers and oceans setting up heaps of sand and stones as objects of worship, immolating oneself by falling from a precipice, or by being burnt up in fire (3) Worshipping false ascetics who have not renounced worldly goods, occupations, or causing injury to others. The eight members are (1) Freedom from doubt (2) Freedom from desire for worldly comforts (3) Freedom from overattachment or regard for body, etc (4) Freedom from inclination for the wrong path (5) Redesiring the defects of ineffective believers (6) Sustaining souls in right conviction (7) Loving regard for pious persons (8) Publishing the greatness of Jaina doctrines (Jaina Scripture)

Even as the dairy maid pulling and slackening the two ends of the churning string by turns churns out the golden butter from the milk, even so the wise work—

alternately at both the two inevitable sides of every question, finds the perfect Truth (*Amrita Chandra Sutra*)

The way to Liberly is right desire, right knowledge, and right conduct—three in one (*Tattwartha Sutra*)

Man! Thou art thy own friend Why wishes thou for a friend beyond thyself? (*Acharanga Sutra*)

That which is free from birth, old age, disease orise, pain and fear, is eternal, blissful and of the nature of pure delight, is called Nirvana (*Ratnalingananda Shantakachchana*)

Forgiveness, humility, straightforwardness truth, convenient restraint austeries, charity, non-violence and chastity are the ten observances to be followed

(*Purushnrtha Siddhyupaya*)

Misery is gone in the case of a man who has no delusion, while delusion is gone in the case of him who has no desire. Desire is gone in the case of him who has no greed, while greed is gone in the case of him who attaches himself to no possession (*Virgartha Pratichchana*)

Full two and seventy are human arts,

But two of these do hold the two chief

parts

One is to feed and keep the body whole,  
The other is to find peace for the soul

(*Jaina Saying*)

N.B. Some of the above extracts have been  
translated by Dr Bhagavan Das in his *Essential  
Unity of all Religions*

## Gospel of Jainism

Sri George Zuza'er  
(Mount Abu)

Jainism is a science, and not a code of arbitrary rules and capricious commandments. It does not claim to derive its authority from any non-human source, but is, science like, founded on the knowledge of those Great Ones who have attained perfection with its aid. Scientific validity can be claimed neither by dogmatism nor mysticism, and it is unnecessary to add that nothing but science or scientific thought can be relied upon to produce immediate certain and unvarying results.

To understand Jainism is first of all to understand the nature of religion which people vaguely talk about and which is still more vaguely preached to them from the pulpits of the numerous creeds which are flourishing in our midst in this age.

Briefly put, religion is the path of liberation of the soul of man from the

suffering or pain which is the lot of beings in this world.

### An Exact Science

All living beings—men, animals and the like—only seek happiness in all things and pursuits, there is no one who does not hanker after eternal Life and Blissfulness in some form or other. Religion claims to be the science which enables the soul to realize the Immortality and Bliss for which it is hankering. Most of the religions of the world, however, have only dogma and myth to offer in place of the scientific thought, which alone can satisfy the demands of reason and from which alone can flow the desired good, under all circumstances. Jainism is a perfectly accu-



rate, daltote and exact science free from mystic ritual unholy superstition and fear-engendering devotion. It does not ask its devotees to accept its teaching on the authority of anything other than reason, and invites all to understand the nature of the subject before pinning their faith on it.

### Nature of Happiness

To begin with Jainism explains the nature of happiness which all are athirst for. It is obvious that the sensual pleasures do not satisfy the soul however much they might tickle the senses for the time being. Sensual pleasure is essentially impermanent depends on the contact with other things and bodies involves trouble and pain in its detriment creates worry and uneasiness after its experience leads to strife with those who happen to be engaged in the pursuit of the same object and gives rise to misery in old age and on the impairment of the senses on which alone enjoyment depends. No one who has analyzed his ideas can possibly find anything in common between the ideal of happiness which he seeks and the sensual gratification described above. What one really wants is the happiness which the gods enjoy—undying unabating, soul enrapturing happiness—not the temporary gratification of lust, but the exhilarating rhythm of ecstasy, delight or bliss, whatever it might be called.

This ecstatic delight which is neither evanescent nor the source of sorrow and pain like the gratification of sensual lust, is really the nature of the soul though through ignorance it is unaware of the fact. The proof of this is to be found in the fact that the pleasure one experiences on the successful performance of some task comes from within and is independent of the senses. Analysis reveals the fact that the essence of this kind of happiness lies in the notion of freedom, so that whenever

the soul is freed from some irksome duty, obligation or restraint—and all kinds of activities except the unrestrained "pulsation" of freedom are only the different forms of bondage—its natural delight at once manifests itself. The soul is the rhythm of free activity of the self-conscious force, the living essence or "will-to-be," and feels dull and heavy when burdened with external and unnatural tasks and obligations. Hence the removal of its obligations and restraints re-establishes its pure rhythm of intense lightness, that is, freedom and enables it to enjoy its Swabhavic Ananda (bliss). It follows from this that when all its obligations and tasks are removed, the soul must necessarily experience the purest kind of delight, which, being Swabhavic (pertaining to the own nature), can have no ending.

What prevents the soul from the enjoyment of its natural joy is ignorance. Hardly one man in a thousand has any idea of the nature of pure joy, and all, more or less, try to extract it from their surroundings, which are by nature utterly incapable of yielding it. Yet if they will only analyze their feelings they will not fail to observe that the moments of true happiness are only the moments of true freedom. Ignorance of the natural joy of the soul, then is the cause which stands between it and happiness. Hence, knowledge is necessarily the road to Bliss.

The kind of knowledge which leads to joy is more comprehensive and perfect than that which is imparted in modern schools and colleges. It is the knowledge of the nature of substances and the forces of nature which rob the soul of its rhythm of freedom and of those which re-establish it therein.

All other kinds of knowledge may be necessary for the man of the world but are

which is the soul seeking perfection, i.e., immortality and bliss.

### Objects of Knowledge

There are seven essential objects of knowledge, called Tattvas. These are—(1) The living or conscious substance, i.e., the soul, (2) the non-living, i.e., the unconscious substance; (3) Asrava, i.e., influx of matter into the soul, (4) Bandha, i.e., bondage, (5) Samvara, or the checking of the inflow of matter; (6) Nirjara the removal of matter from the soul, and (7) Moksha-Nirvaae, i.e., freedom. We shall take up each of these seven Tattwas separately, and shall deal with them briefly.

(1) The soul is the living substance, and is pure consciousness in essence, it is not the product of matter to any sense. It is by nature all knowing and blissful, and is endowed with unerring, inexhaustible energy. All substances are eternal, and the soul is no exception to the rule. It is Amorritik, that is, not possessed of sensible qualities, hence it cannot be perceived by the senses though it is not actually formless, since all things which exist must have some sort of form. Souls have existed contaminated with matter from beginninglessness and are consequently unable to enjoy their Swabhavik attributes, omniscience, bliss and the like. The practising of the rules of right conduct however, enables one to remove the impurities which obstruct the thirteen blessed qualities of the soul, the four principal ones of which are collectively called Ananta Chatushtaya (infinity quartette) namely infinite Perception, infinite Knowledge, infinite Bliss and infinite Power.

(2) The non-living substances comprise Pudgala, that is matter, time, space, Dharma, and Adharma. Jainism maintains that no world process or evolution, is possible in the absence of any one or more of these five non-soul substances and spirits (sons).

Specs is necessary for localization, time for continuity and succession, Dharma and Adharma for motion and rest, respectively, matter for supplying the material of bodies and souls for life, knowledge and enjoyment. These six substances and their nature have been fully dealt with by Jeloprophosphher, and, therefore, it is not necessary to explain them at length here.

(3) The third Tattva is Asrava, which signifies the inflow of Karmic matter into the soul. In consequence of its activities, the soul attracts to itself particles of matter which under the influence of its passions combine with it, thereby crippling its natural functions and constituting its bondage. Jainism maintains that the soul is eternal and does not undergo destruction during the entire beginningless Eternity of the past, on account of the Karmic forces with which it is endowed. The Karmic Baodhas (bonds of Karmas) are forged by the fusion of spirit and matter, and in the soul of its natural perfectness and freedom. A fettered soul thus resembles a bird whose wings have been sown up to prevent its flying away. The soul is free by nature, like the bird, but, owing to the association of matter, feels as if its wings had been cut, and cannot enjoy its natural freedom and joy.

(4) Bandha is the state of bondage of the soul as already explained. There are many kinds of bonds which have to be broken before Nirvana can be attained.

(5) Samvara is the process of checking the inflow of Karmic matter into the constitution of the soul. Obviously, freedom cannot be had so long as the bondage of the soul is not terminated by the removal of the particles of matter of which its Karmic bonds are forged. The first step towards this end is the checking of the further inflow of matter which ceaselessly flows into the constitution of the soul.

(6) The inflow of fresh matter being checked, the next step is to remove the bounds one by one. This is called Nirjara. When all the bounds are broken asunder, and the soul is freed from all its crippling relations with matter, it enjoys its natural freedom and bliss and omniscience.

(7) The seventh and the last Tattva is naturally the ideal of perfection, that is, freedom, immortality and bliss which the soul attains to on freeing itself from all its bounds.

### Karma

Such is the nature of the essential principles or Tattvas. To recapitulate briefly, Jainism maintains that all living beings in the universe are conscious entities possessed of fullness and perfection, and capable of manifesting them by self exertion in the right direction. Their natural perfection, which includes immortality, omniscience, infinite energy and infinite bliss, is marred by the operation of their own Karma, that is, of the different kinds of forces engendered in the soul in conjunction with matter by its own actions. Hence all that the soul has to do is to check the further influx of Karmic matter and to destroy its bounds. The moment this can be done its natural perfection will be attained, and freedom, immortality and bliss enjoyed. There is no question of begging or bargaining with anyone in this system, and it is noteworthy that it is absolutely impossible for any outside agency to confer either the immortality, the bliss or the perfection which the soul is hankering after and ceaselessly tries to obtain from its surroundings, the whole thing is a question of the law of causes and effects.

Jainism does not, for the foregoing reason, claim devotion to any being or beings in the hope of obtaining bliss, immortality or perfection from them. These are already the natural properties of the soul,

and cannot possibly be had from outside. Hence Jainism does not recognize the God of popular theology, but urges the aspirational soul to worship the feet of the perfected Siddhas, in the same way as one would show reverence to a teacher. The greatest teacher is certainly entitled to the greatest amount of reverence, and no teacher can certainly be greater than the omniscient Tirthankaras who not only knew all things, but the perfection of whose knowledge is also fully demonstrated by the fact that it enabled them to attain the fullest degree of perfection.

Such is the main teaching of Jainism, and it is obvious that it has nothing in common with any of those systems of religion, which engender or encourage superstition. The path to Nirvana or Absolution according to Jainism, consists in right belief, right knowledge and right conduct.

### True Civilization

Now let us consider the influence of Jainism on civilization. Some people seem to possess what may be described as an unholly dread of religion on the ground that it would be destructive of civilization. This fear is however quite unfounded, and confined to those who have no idea of the great ideal of the soul, and whose conception of being does not embrace the life beyond the grave. Let us not confound civilization with sensualism, refined or gross. The true significance of civilization means nothing if not the culture of the soul, on lines which are compatible with its steady progress, both here and in the life or lives after death. Sensualism, however much it might be refined, is only calculated to destroy the finer instincts of the soul, making it negative and consequently foredooming it to the torments of hell and future undesirable incarnations, as brutes and beasts.

The ancients were by no means deficient in the knowledge of things and actions which have contributed towards the building up of what we boast of as our modern civilization, but they also knew that the things which appeal to the senses only lead to the degeneration of the soul, and wisely restrained from cultivating, beyond certain useful limits, the arts and sciences which tend to fatten the body at the cost of the spiritual nourishment of the soul.

The one most marked feature of distinction between man and animal is the thinking capacity, which the former is endowed with, and may develop to perfection, and from which the latter is largely debarred, hence, while an animal has little or no chance of bettering its condition in its present form, man may and ought to avail himself of the opportunity if he would avoid pain and suffering here and hereafter. The civilization which enables him to do so, speedily, is the only form of culture of which reason can approve, not the civilization which invites him to the fold of sensualism. The one most prominent feature of the modernization is the cost of living, which is going up from day to day and which entails the devotion of whole time labour for the procuring of the means of livelihood and those other things which are necessary to enable one to be counted as a "somebody" in society. This leaves no time for spiritual unfoldment, which itself demands the withdrawal of the outgoing energy and its inner concentration for the destruction of the Karmic bonds.

The civilization of the ancients, on the contrary, never lost sight of the necessity for the spiritual evolution of the soul, and then the cost of living was so cheap that everyone could procure the necessities of life without much trouble or labour, utilizing every moment of valuable time for

devotion to God, i.e., the Ideal of Perfection and Bliss.

### Salvation

Jainism prescribes two kinds of rules of conduct for the souls which aspire to attain Salvation—those becoming ascetics and those suitable for the life of the householder. The former's rigidly to well calculated to lead to emancipation in the course of our earth-life but the latter are meant for those not sufficiently advanced to undertake the arduous and arduous vows of the ascetic. Hence the effect of the influence of Jainism on modern civilization does not mean the disappearance of its useful institutions at all, but only the elimination such of them as actually play havoc with the spiritual aspirations of the soul and lead it to undesirable regions and unhappy incarnations in the future.

The value of religion as the only means of salvation cannot be exaggerated. Myths only make us superstitious, and mysticism is apt to produce intellectual fog and mist. It is clear thinking alone which can lead us into the region of Light and Life, for which every soul is athirst. History shows how truth entombed in the sepulchre of myth and legend is soon lost to view and replaced by unholy superstition and purblind bigotry, so often mistaken for faith. The purpose these myths serve is great, but, when all is said and done, they are useful to him alone who can understand their significance. The soul is hankering after the realization of the great ideal of Perfection, that is Godhood, but the theogonies of to-day have nothing better than mystic and misty dogmas to console it with.

The realization of Godhood requires the conception of Truth, i.e., the ideal to be attained, and the knowledge of the means to attain it with, in the clearest possible way. Mythology alone can hardly

serve that purpose. It follows from this that religion can only benefit when it is conducive to precise and clear thinking. The attempt to educate the masses by means of myths and legends has been given a sufficient trial all these past 2,000 years or so, but do we not see that it has only gone to make men irreligious and cruel at heart? It is high time now that truth was imparted to them in its pure, undisguised form. The fault with us is that we are always ready to

set up ourselves as prophets and teachers without ever having been students ourselves. When we approach Religion as humble seekers after Truth, and not in the spirit of bigotry or conceit, it will be seen that Jainism stands unrivalled among the systems which claim to impart the Truth.

Live and let live and help others to live must be the motto of a truly civilized man.

May all beings be happy.

## Universal Principles of Jainism

Dr Mohammed Hafiz Syed, Ph.D., D.Litt.  
(Allahabad)

Every system of thought or religion that claims to possess some truth about me and his origin, his day-to-day functions and final destiny must necessarily be meant not only for the special follower of its creed or way of life but also for all human beings.

From my point of view, it is inaccurate to call Jainism a religion in the sense that other religions are. On closer study and critical examination of its basic principles one is drawn to the conclusion that Jainism is more of a philosophical thought than a set dogmatic religion. The only difference between Jainism and Western philosophy is that the latter is barren, and leads one nowhere beyond speculative thought and guesses at Truth, whereas Jainism has laid down definite ideas and ideals of human progress and perfection, man's origin and the final goal of blissful existence that awaits him. The method of approach to truth in Jainism is fairly scientific in the sense that it treats the problem of life and soul with the well-known system of classification, analysis and right and accurate understanding.

The 24 teachers that this system of thought has produced, popularly called Tirthankaras, were men of right vision and perfect spiritual insight and were fully familiar with the essence of things real and mortal, they had attained their perfection through their own self-effort, purification of thought and action, and complete freedom from any iota of desire. They were in a position, therefore, to lay down certain fundamental principles of life and death which they had intuited through their direct spiritual experience.

### Brotherhood of Life

The system of thought popularly called Jainism has to be studied in a calm, philosophic, quiet atmosphere. We find that the problem of human existence is looked at with the eye of the philosopher, of the metaphysician and the question of human conduct is tackled with definite directness, which tells us how a man should live, what is his relation with the lower creatures round him, how he should conduct his life, his actions that he may not injure any living creature. One might almost sum up the outlook of Jainism in one phrase that we

find in the *Sutra Krishnaji III 29* that men by injuring or living creature reaches the Nirvana, which is Peace. That is the phrase which seems to carry with it the whole thought of Jaina Peace—peace between man and man, peace between man and animal, peace everywhere and in all things, a perfect brotherhood of all that lives. Such is the ideal of a Jaina that is the thought he endeavours to realize upon earth.

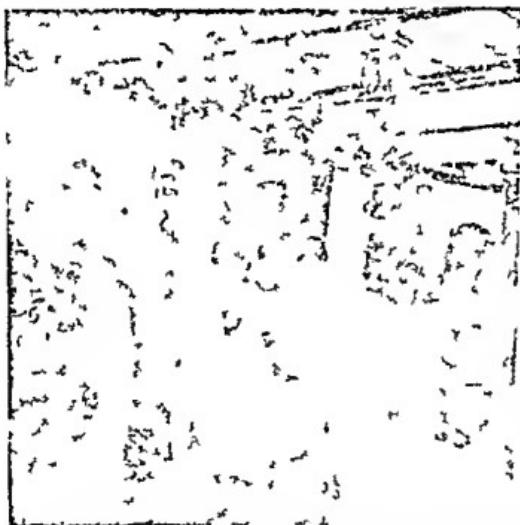
Margaret Stevenson writes in her booklet on Jainism: "The Jainas have no belief in one eternal God Supreme Ruler and the Creator of the world. They believe the world to be eternal and give strangely inadequate reasons to prove that it could never have been created. They deny the fatherhood of God and the whole system of their caste rules as a negation of the brotherhood of man. Though freely using the titles which other religions reserve for the Supreme Being they apply them to human beings who have gradually raised themselves to certain peculiarly exalted position."

This statement clearly shows how a follower of Christian faith could completely misunderstand the Jaina point of view and how wrongly she has misinterpreted it. Let us see what are the fundamental

basic principles of Jainism on which the philosophy of life and death is based. A correct understanding of the Jaina point of view will dispel the darkness of ignorance from the mind of a devout Christian who might try to see everything through his or her narrow vision.

#### Philosophy

The Jaina philosophy holds that man is not yet perfect. He can improve i.e. he can advance in the direction of perfection. The human soul can attain the highest pinnacle of spiritual glory. In its parfect condition the soul enjoys its true and eternal character whereof the characteristics are the four infinites — infinite perception of faith, infinite knowledge, infinite power and infinite bliss.



Dr. M H Syed (centre) at one of the sessions of the World Parliament of Religions held in 1953 at Rishikesh. Dr. C P Pameeswami Aiyar is on his right. (The article on this page was written for some other occasion.)

only after the entire subjugation of matter that the soul attains perfection, freedom and happiness. It is such a free and happy soul that is called *Atma* the conqueror or *Tirthankara* the guide.

These perfect souls reach the height of Godhead with all its known connotation. It is clear that this conception of Godhead is more rational and scientific than the Ideal of extra cosmic God sitting on High and guiding human affairs. According to

the Jaina system of thought a man's progress is endless and he attains his Godhood through a long process of evolution and persistent self-effort. That is the glory and destiny of man guaranteed by Jainism. This ideal is not exclusively meant for those who are born in a Jaina family or believe in its creed, but is meant for all mankind and is distinctly universal in its application.

#### Catholicity of Attitude

The worship or reverence according to Jainism is given to all human souls worthy of it, in whatever country or clime they may be. The worship is impersonal.

One of the fundamental principles of Jainism is truly universal and is meant for all human beings man himself, and he alone, is responsible for all that is good or bad in his life. Jainism more than any other creed gives absolute religious independence and freedom to man. Nothing can intervene between the actions we do and the fruits thereof.

As compared with most of the religions, it is important to notice that Jainism has a very definite and uncompromising attitude towards the conception of God. It is accused of being atheistic. This is not so, because Jainism believes in Godhead and innumerable gods but certainly Jainism is atheistic in not believing its gods to have created the universe. It must be noted by Mrs. Margaret Stevenson that creation implies volition, a desire to create. A desire can only relate to something or fact which is not, but ought to be, therefore it implies imperfection. And God cannot be imperfect. This is the most commonsense argument against the theory of God as the Creator of the universe. In short, believers in the creation theory make God a man, bring Him down to the level of need and imperfection, whereas Jainism raises man to Godhood and inspires him to raise him-

self as near to Godhood as possible by steady faith, right perception, perfect knowledge and, above all, a spotless life.

There are two categories Soul, Jiva; and non-soul, Ajiva. The whole universe falls under this division, which is logically perfect. It is division by dichotomy. Jiva is that which lives, whether a worm, or an ant, or a rose, or a nightingale, or a horse, or a man. It is capable of seeing and knowing all, it desires happiness and avoids pain.

Jainism exposes the hollowness of death. One who believes in eternity and therefore, immortality of the soul, does not dread death which means only the disappearance of the physical form. Every soul is potentially pure. Matter is an unclean evil. The soul is ever-perfect, all-powerful. It wanders in the Samsara. It can return to its perfect condition. It goes upward and upward endlessly. The soul is a Dravya and therefore like every other Dravya it is eternal.

In every man, in every living being, a demand for happiness and an aversion to pain is the first universal feature of life. It seeks happiness exempt from decay. The peace and bliss are the twin goals aimed at by the soul.

The aim of the Jaina ethics is to organize the combined activity of a society so that the individuals may have the greatest possible number of facilities for attaining Moksha or Nirvana i.e. perfect peace and bliss of the soul.

#### Social Behaviour

A true Jaina will do nothing to hurt the feelings of another person, man, woman or child, nor will he violate the principles of right ethical conduct and righteousness. Jaina ethics is meant for men and women of all positions—for kings, warriors, traders, artisans, agriculturists, housewives, and so on. The wise will choose the Jaina rules

justice and equal distribution of material wealth have been considered to be the principal virtues.

The names of Sage Anandaghosha, the trustee Bhamaśa and the philanthropist Jagadusha are famous in the history of the Jain religion. The concept of a secular state, which is the basis of our constitution, had already been anticipated in the Jaina Shastras, as also the modern "Bhutan-Yagna," which aims at equal distribution of wealth and land. In practical life, one more thing which need be remembered, is that democracy can only thrive by putting the village as the unit of the state. Thus can an organization be built up, which will ensure the unity of India as a whole, while developing, side by side, the justifiable freedom of an individual. It is therefore that Gandhiji gives priority, in the con-

structive programme, in the village uplift and the cultivation of the mother-tongue. Pali and Ardha-Magadhi got importance in the age of Mahavira and Buddha for similar reasons.

With these ideals before us, if we proceed on our path, discarding the abiding bonds of caste, colour, creed and sex, crossing the pool of egoism, recognizing merit wherever found, seeing good in everything, making a serious effort to secure world-peace, and using our intellect, wealth and influence for the benefit of others, we shall, by the grace of God, be able to secure through united effort of all sincere workers, peace in the world and joy for every human being and will be able to see the world free from communism, violent revolution and vested interests.

## An Outline of Jaina Ethics and Philosophy

Sri Jyoti Prasad Jain

Signs of threatening environments of insecurity, struggles and impending wars all over the world are all due to the strong control of human relations by instincts of greed and selfishness. There is no doubt that religion alone has the power to curb all the evils that are ruling the human passions, but this is only possible when true religious belief is awakened in the heart of every man. As majority of the people are governed by the ideas of thinkers, scholars and saints of their respective classes and communities, it is the duty of these few talented and privileged persons in every community, first of all, to come to a proper understanding. With an open mind, clear of all prejudices and misconceptions, they should make a sincere effort to understand each religion and realize the essential unity of all the religions of the world. They must first

realize that the whole humanity is one caste and brotherhood, and their religion is also basically one, and that man in his social life cannot achieve peace and concord unless he has made 'live and let live' his motto in life.

The disharmonic balance of things and destructive discussions over philosophical problems need now be stopped. A tendency of right and deep thinking, understanding and of finding harmony out of the created differences should be inculcated. This benevolent tendency of the religious thinkers and their appeal in the masses to act and behave with proper discrimination, consideration and essential spirit of compromise and adjustment in society, will not only save humanity from the environment of distress and insecurity but will also create a healthy atmosphere of peace and confidence in the human world. Then

of conduct for every action of their avocates too 'Do your duty, and do it humanely as possible' This, to brief, is the primary precept of Jainism and is really meant for all human beings; therefore it is a universal doctrine.

## Some Ideals of Jainism

Sant Sri Balaji,

(Ahmedabad)

It has been repeatedly stated in the Jain Shastras that there is only one and todivisible force or spirit which pervades not only the human kingdom but the animal kingdom as well, and which can be grasped or realized by effort and perseverance. An instance is given of a deer who by reason of its finer vision could bring about the union between a mendicant and a liberal-hearted wood-cutter. Likewise, an elevated soul in the body of a frog voluntarily got itself crushed while running to have darshan of Sri Mahavira and attained liberation. When even a deer or a frog can attain Sainthood there cannot be any limitation to the effort of a human being. From this point of view Jain philosophy can be favourably compared to other philosophical systems. It asserts that all created beings can attain the state of perfection. It states that though the earthen vessels have varying shapes and names they in reality are the same earth.

In order that these principles can be applied to practical life the Shastras have laid stress on two things (1) recognition of merit (Guna Puja), and (2) seeing good (Mangala) in everything. As an illustration of Guna Puja, the Jain philosophy has enjoined reverence with Bhava to all the saints of the world. The Great Hemchandracharya when he visited the Shiva Mandir of Patan exclaimed, "I bow to Him who is the source of the universe and before whom worldliness vanishes, may

He be Vishnu or Brahma or Shiva or Jina." Among the three great men mentioned by Mahatma Gandhi as his Gurus, the first was an Adarsha (ideal) Jain. From him Gaodhiji learnt the cosmopolitan nature of Hindu religion and realized the truth of Lokamanya Tilak's remark that the non-violence of the Jain religion had considerably influenced the Vedic religion. Gaodhiji showed the way to world peace by successfully putting into practice the principle of non-violence on a mass scale.

There is a story of two brothers, Bharata and Bahubali, who went to fight on a battlefield, where they met an emaciated soul and finally decided to fight with each other only mentally (i.e.) on behalf of the assembled armies, and thereby avoided a bloody battle.

In Jain Shastras both those who practise high penance and those who do minor penance, are put on the same level. There is no distinction of colour, sex, sect or caste. In the Jain philosophy non-hoarding or non-possessiveness (Aparigraha) is considered more important than the suppression of egoism. It lays down that one should either be a trustee of hoarded wealth or should discard it. It says that where egoism prevails greed increases and exploitation is generated. That is why in the Shastras, limitations have been prescribed to trade and the enjoyment of material objects. Daya and Dana (kindness and charity) have been considered to be the basis of all religions, and

justice and equal distribution of material wealth have been considered to be the principal virtues.

The names of Sage Anandadechana, the trustee Bhamaśha and the philanthropist Jagadusha are famous in the history of the Jaina religion. The concept of a secular state, which is the basis of our constitution, had already been anticipated in the Jaina Shastras, as also the modern "Bhutan-Yaga" which aims at equal distribution of wealth and lend in practical life, one more thing which need be remembered, is that democracy can only thrive by putting the village as the unit of the state. Thus can an organization be built up, which will secure the unity of India as a whole, while developing, side by side, the justifiable freedom of an individual. It is therefore that Gandhiji gives priority, in the con-

structive programme, to the village uplift and the cultivation of the mother tongue Pali and Ardha-Magadhi got importance in the age of Mahavira and Buddha for similar reasons.

With these ideals before us, if we proceed on our path, discarding the stiffening bonds of caste, colour, creed and sex, crossing the pool of egoism, recognizing merit wherever found, seeing good in everything, making a serious effort to secure world-peace, and using our intellect, wealth and influence for the benefit of others, we shall, by the grace of God be able to secure through united effort of all sincere workers, peace in the world and joy for every human being and will be able to see the world free from communalism, violent revolution and vested interests.

## An Outline of Jaina Ethics and Philosophy

Sri Jyoti Prasad Jain

Signs of threatening environments of insecurity, struggles and impending wars all over the world are all due to the strong control of human relations by instincts of greed and selfishness. There is no doubt that religion alone has the power to curb all the evils that are ruling the human passions, but this is only possible when true religious belief is awakened in the heart of every man. As majority of the people are governed by the ideas of thinkers, scholars and saviors of their respective classes and communities, it is the duty of these few talented and privileged persons of every community, first of all, to come to a proper understanding. With an open mind, clean of all prejudices and misconceptions, they should make a sincere effort to understand each religion and realize the essential motto of all the religions of the world. They must first

realize that the whole humanity is one caste and brotherhood, and their religion is also basically one, and that man in his social life cannot achieve peace and concord unless he has made 'live and let live' his motto of life.

The disharmonic balance of things and destructive discussions over philosophical problems need now be stopped. A tendency of right and deep thinking, understanding and of finding harmony out of the created differences should be inculcated. This benevolent tendency of the religious thinkers and their appeal to the masses to act and behave with proper discrimination, consideration and essential spirit of compromise and adjustment in society, will not only save humanity from the environment of distress and insecurity but will also create a healthy atmosphere of peace and confidence in the human world. Then

alone will mankind find solace and time to take interest in the spiritual and cultural activities of the world.

### Two Aspects of Religion

There are apparently two aspects of all religions, the outer and the inner. The outer aspect is the form of the different kinds of worship and rituals, while the inner is the rule of ethical and moral conduct, which are more or less common in all religions. Unfortunately, primary importance is given to the outer aspect or to the differing outer forms of religious worship and rituals, and to act according to the common inner spirit of religion is usually forgotten. This tendency has naturally divided the entire humanity into different religious sects and it has erected strong barriers between all such sects creating an atmosphere of disharmony and hatred with one another. Mankind has thus lost sight of the true and essential inner aspect of all religions.

I will impress this point by an illustration of Mahatma Gandhi. This great man was born in a community of the Vedic religion and was closely connected with the Jaina religion, being brought up in the environment of Jaina culture besides various other ties of relationship. But he perhaps never performed Yajnas or sacrifices after the actions of the Vedas. He was never heard to have worshipped in any Vaishnava or Jaina temple. Yet, leaving aside the gods of every religion to whom the outer form alone is primary, people of many religions have claimed this great man as the follower of their respective religions, because he followed in his every-day life the fundamental code, i.e., the inner aspect, which is common in all religions. He was said to be a staunch follower of the Gita, though by a close study of his actions, we find that he discarded the 'Dushita Daman' Siddhantha of the Gita

else. He respected the Vedas of the Hindus, the Agamas of the Jainas, the Pitakas of the Buddhists, the Quran of the Muslims and the Bible of the Christians, for their common, ethical and moral teachings.

He observed his prayers in open fields in the company of the people of all castes and creeds. The Ram of his famous Kirtan was not the Rama, son of Dasharatha but who is the essence of all arias and is named Rama, Rahtm, Ishwar, Aitsh, etc., according to one's own religious faith. Thus from the point of view of the bigots, this great man was an irreligious person. If we cast a glance over his actions, whether in his private or political life, solving the problems of Harijans, or seeing him working for rural development or in any other social field, we will find that all his actions were thoroughly saturated with this true and common inner spirit and cessation of all the religions of the world. For this very sake he was considered unani-

meously one of the greatest men of all times. No doubt, every religion, worth the name, has got its own philosophy of life. Without this knowledge, no religion can be said to be an independent religion. But this serious subject is every religion happens to be the concern of only a few persons in all communities. Further, the ultimate Truth cannot be realized by philosophical discipline alone; it is only a means to that end. Let, however, all these different thoughts about life be admitted as the different chapters of thought about one common whole.

### Jaina Philosophy

What are the tenets of Jaina ethics and philosophy? In a few words, Jainism is not a one-sided view of life. It upholds all views of life realized upto this time within it. Out of their different experiences and realizations about life, Jaina seers

did not claim their thinking and experience as novel things but like the game of word-making they upheld their views at the proper place alongside of the other views of life realized by other fellow seers of their times. This creative tendency has not allowed any branch of knowledge or thought to go astray, being incomplete in itself, without serving a fruitful purpose. Instead, all different thoughts from different angles of vision thus derived and gathered together, formed a big brotherhood of life in Jainism. Below explaining this view of life, one might hear the opinions of some of the eminent scholars, thinkers and great men which they formed after deep study of the literature on Jainology or from contact with Jaina scholars and learned saints.

#### Opinions of Scholars

Up to the close of the last century, even impartial scholars held very poor opinion about Jainism, which was unfortunately based on hearsay. The superficial outward resemblance of Jainism with Hinduism and Buddhism also did not induce them to study the Jaina literature. Further, the literature on Jainism being also mainly in Prakrit and Sanskrit was not easily accessible to those scholars who did not know these old oriental languages. In his forewording note to 'The Jaina Philosophy of Non-absolutism' the eminent scholar Dr Satyendra Mukerji of the Calcutta University writes: 'It is a pity that while other systems of Indian philosophy have so many exponents, both here and abroad, the rich deep and vast treasures of the Jains thought relating to all fields of culture, particularly relating to metaphysics, epistemology and logic, should be so little known to the world at large. This ignoble tact is not at all conducive to the credit of the rich adherents of the Jaina Faith in this land.'

This deficiency is, however, now being made up by several organizations of the Jaina community.

In discussing the place of Jainism in the system of Indian philosophy, Mr M. M. Ganga Nath Jha opines: "The Jaina philosophy, no doubt, holds certain principles in common with Buddhism, Vedanta, Sankhya, Nyaya and Vaisheshika systems but this does not disprove its independent origin and free development. It has some similarities with other Indian systems, but it has its own peculiarities and marked differences as well."

Dr. S. C. Vidyabhushan says: "Jainism is one of the most ancient and noble religions..... India stands unique in the world of her spiritual and philosophical development, no one will deny that credit goes to the Jains no less than to the Brahmins and the Buddhists."

Prof. Ram P. Das Chandra a famous scholar of archaeology says: "The ancient Jaina sculptures of Mathura, dating from 1st century A.D., guarantee the antiquity and authenticity of many of the Jaina traditions."

Dr. R. Fuhrer says, "Lord Nemi Nath (or Arist Nemi) the 22nd Tirthankara of the Jains (a contemporary of Lord Krishna) has been accepted as a historical person." Same is the opinion of L. D. Barnett.

Further, Dr. Praj Nath Vidyalekshmi published a note about on a copper plate of the Babylonian (Chaldean) King Nebuchadnezzar (1140 B.C.) which he had discovered in Kathiawar. In deciphering this, the learned professor says: "The inscription is of great historical value. It may go a long way in proving the antiquity of Jaina religion, since the name of Nemi Nath appears in the inscription."

These evidences go to prove that the worship of Lord Nemi Nath or Arist Nemi the 22nd Jain Tirthankara, was established

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Even the reputed Vedic scholars like Prof V P Vadyar and Sri Radha Krishna accepted the existence of Jainism parallel to Vedic religion in India. Sri Radha Krishna writes The Yajurveda mentions the names of three Tirthankaras Rishabh, Ajit Nath and Arishti Nomi.

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#### Antiquity

The epoch making discovery of the prehistoric Indus Valley civilization of Mohenjodaro and Harappa further brings to light the antiquity of Jainism. Sir John Marshall Prof Ram Prasad Chandra Prof Pran Nath Prof S Srikanta Shestr have all held this Indus Valley civilization as Non Vedio and Pre Vedic.

Many nude figures with signs of bull on several images found in these excavations indicate the sign of Jaina Rishabh and Rishabha means bull. Major General J G R Farlong FRSE FRS after his 17 years of study and research on this discovery writes All upper western and north central India was then indeed from unknown times ruled by Dravidas and given to tree serpent and phallic worship but there also then existed throughout Upper India an ancient and highly religious philosophical ethical and severely ascetical religion viz Jainism out of which clearly developed the early ascetical features of Brahminism and Buddhism.

Lastly to quote one more erudite and eminent German scholar Prof Jacoby Harman who says In conclusion

let me assert my conviction that Jainism is an original system quite distinct and independent from all others and therefore it is of great importance for the study of philosophical thought and religious life in ancient India.

Inspired by his studies in Jaina cultural and philosophical literature the late Sir Samukham Chetty once said It has occurred to me as a very interesting historical speculation as to what must have been the real genesis of this great religion (Jainism) in India. Looking to this great religion from that point of view I am tempted to believe that Jainism was probably the earliest religion prevalent in India and it was the flourishing religion when the Aryan migration came in India and when the religion of the Vedas was being evolved in the Punjab. I think it was the tremendous force let loose by Lord Mahavira that really created Lord Buddha.

He further says It is beyond my capacity to say anything about the greatness of the Jaina religion. I have read sufficiently to warrant my saying that the contribution which the Jains have made to the Indian culture is something unique. I personally believe that if Jainism had kept its hold firmly in India we would have had a more united India and certainly a greater India than today.

Mahatma Gandhi and Lokamanya Tilak had also expressed such views on various occasions about Jainism acknowledging the antiquity, benevolence of its high ethics and depth of its logic and spiritual philosophy.

#### Concept of Universe

According to Jainism this universe is not illusory. It is not a creation of imagination but is a fact and reality. It is a display of the soul and non soul (inanimate) elements. Jiva or soul is the animating substance having consciousness as its

existing, living feature from the non soul or matter is no substance. The soul is characterized by consciousness. This quality

of consciousness of the soul is inherent in a latent stage and is inseparable. It is not the product of the stimulus in any sense. The stimulus is related to a mundane soul and it merely awakens the consciousness which exists in dormant state within the soul due to the adverse action of the Karmas over it. The stimulus thus does not create the state of consciousness but produces a stir or excitement only. This is not at all surprising. Matter too possesses many wonderful qualities and properties of its own. Modern science has recognized the indestructible quality and other inherent properties of matter. The soul though entirely different from matter and is separable from its conjugation is termed as bound with Karmic matter like milk and water and so long as it is in conjugation with Karmic matter it has a close relationship with it.

Though the qualities or the properties of matter cannot obliterate the inherent natural and inseparable qualities of the soul i.e. knowledge, perception etc. they can blur the natural vision of the soul for the time being e.g. an intoxicated man. Wine has its own properties of stupefying the intelligence. When it is kept in the bottle it does not act because the bottle does not possess the quality of consciousness or intelligence. But it acts as soon as it reaches the stomach of a man. So too with soul and matter. Matter does not destroy the inherent quality of soul. The soul needs the help of the sense organs e.g. eyes, ears etc. only so long as it is bound by the Karma. The pure soul realizes the whole vision of a thing by mere intuition and perception. The way to liberate the soul from the bondage of Karma is called Sadhna or means of

liberation in Jainism which shall be described hereafter.

### Material World

The material world is the product of various kinds of non soul substances. All these elements are real, eternal and infinite in number. The individual elements are not visible in their natural form. It is only the synthetic or the compound state of all elements that is known as the material world visible to us. Every element has got its own inherent qualities or properties and they are always acting and reacting over one another. On this principle of cause and effect there rests the material world which is always subject to change at every moment. But change is possible only in the form of samsara. Subtle changes are always taking place. Sometimes catastrophic changes also take place according to this natural law of cause and effect. In the Jaina terminology Upada is formation, Dhrauvya is permanence or coexistence or light change and Vyaya is termed as catastrophic change. All these three factors are in fact one and the same thing i.e. change but are termed as above from different angles of vision. There is no creation or destruction by any omnipotent power but there is formation or change as above. The above three factors viz. formation, existence and change are never at rest. The universe is in a constant state of flux.

Besides Pudgal or matter there is an other element as Dharma. This helps the soul and Pudgal or the unconscious matter in the state of movement. It however does not move in itself. It is helpful in the movement of other objects like the railway lines which are helpful in the movement of engines. Adharma is that which checks the right movement of objects as opposed to Dharma in its function. Akasa or space is the fourth kind of substance which

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gives room or space to all other substances within it. Kala or time is the fifth kind of substance which causes change in things and creates present, past and future. The present past and future are relative names of change. It is wrong to think that the conception of priority and posteriority about an identity alone has given rise to the idea of time. Kala or time is a metaphysical reality in Jaina philosophy.

Thus formation, existence and change, or Utpad, Dhrauvya and Vyaya, are the Jaina Trinity, which pervades all the substances and attributes to this universe a permanent and eternal character. The birth or destruction and growth and origin, which are daily seen in this world, are nothing but modifications of the eternal substances. This universe thus made of realities is itself real and permanent in nature and it is governed by its own inherent law of cause and effect by any superhuman power.

Jivas or animates, like the Ajivas or inanimates or non-soul substances, also have no origin. They are in existence since ever, and shall exist for ever and are infinite in number. The Jivas or souls are of two kinds, the liberated souls and the mundane or worldly souls, which are bound by Karmas and are subject to transmigration from one form to the other, according to the effect of the Karmas on them. The Karmas are said to be of eight kinds and are obstructive in the attainment of Self realization. After following the prescribed technical rules of conduct, the mundane soul attains its Godly nature and is liberated from births and deaths. Then the soul resigns its inherent qualities, i.e., infinite perception, infinite power infinite happiness etc. The liberated souls live in Lokakshana which is said to be at the extremity of the Lokakshana or of the mundane world. But these two Lokakshana and

Alokakshana together form the whole universe. These liberated souls are also infinite in number; they are eternal and are infinite in number. From eternity the display of both the liberated and mundane souls is continuous and shall ever continue. The liberated souls in Alokakshana from their existence point of view are infinite in number, but unitedly from their nature point of view they are all one and are all-pervading or Sarvsvyapti. As for example: In a big hall hundreds of electric bulbs are burning. To an onlooker from outside the gate, only a flood of light will be visible and not the hundreds of the existing sources of light inside the hall. Thus there is one common quality or nature in all the liberated souls and their quality of light is all pervading, but from their existence point of view there are number of separate entities.

#### Process of Liberation

The worldly or the impure soul is like a lump of gold dug out from a gold mine. It is gold mixed with foreign matter. Just as there is a chemical process by which the foreign matter is separated from the gold particles and pure gold is extracted, the foreign Karmic matter is separated from the soul by the soul itself by practising asceticical rules of conduct, as prescribed in Jainism. Every action of a living being, whether by thought or speech or action, causes the influx known as Ashreya of Karmic matter, but the Karmic matter is conjugated with the soul in relation to the attachment of the soul with the action performed. This firm conjugation is termed as Bandhan. If the soul has done any action disinterestedly, i.e., without feeling the least pleasure or pain with action itself, the influx of the Karmic matter will no doubt be caused but there will be no firm conjugation or Bandhan for the soul thereof. Thus by acting disinter-

in vice to others justice and truth in every day life and right behaviour are not only said to be essential in Jainism for obtaining salvation in the social life in this world but it has equally a technical significance i.e. the attainment of a better life beyond or ultimate liberation. It is here that the philosophical insight is exposed to ethical wisdom the former illuminates the one while the latter leads to the other. The is a very vast description of the benevolent ethical influence in Jaina Literature.

Right faith right cognition and right conduct are the three fundamental and practical principles of life in Jaina ethics around which the whole Jaina spiritual philosophy revolves. The entire Jaina community of monks is now found in two septs—Digambara and Svetambara. At one time monks of both these classes were under one common organization and they really did very useful missionary work jointly for the betterment of all humans. The Jaina community at large consisting of householders is found like other religious communities quite materialistic in outlook and hankering after worldly pleasures. The Jainas are generally charitable sacrificing their spirit and are great lovers of peace justice and truth. This outlook and character found in the Jaina community today is due to the effect of the Jaina ethics and belief in its spiritual philosophy. If Jainism had kept its hold firmly in India and the Jaina community had kept its standards of character we could have had a more united and certainly a greater India than today as Sri Shanmukham Chetty had said. Now a little explanation need also be given of the principle of the Jaina Ahimsa which has hitherto been misunderstood and misinterpreted by many persons. Even the academic world knew very little about the practical value of this virtuous principle before the advent of Mahatma Gandhi.

A. M.

I will start this part with the words of Mahatma Gandhi which were put in his hands by Harijan on the eve of a birthday of Lord Mahavira and are now reproduced on the title page of Bhagwan Mahatma (written by Muni Sri Chauthawal). The literal translation of the words of Mahatma Gandhi is:

'No religion of the world has explained the principle of Ahimsa so deeply and scientifically as is discussed with its applicability in every day human life in Jainism. As and when the benevolent principle of Ahimsa or non violence will be searched for practice by the people of the world to achieve their end of life in this world and beyond Jainism is sure to have the uppermost status and Lord Mahavira is sure in his respects as the greatest authority on Ahimsa.'

There are people who think that if one is slapped on one of his cheeks he should present the other cheek also to the aggressor. The opposite view is that the stroke of brickbat should be replied with stone and even with bullet. Jainism has imbibed both these views in its own interpretation of Ahimsa but has prescribed the use of both the different principles under different circumstances of life with the essential equilibrium of the non violent intention even while doing an act of violence in emergent circumstances. For monks no doubt complete abstention from acts of violence is prescribed in Jainism and they must always conduct themselves after the former view. But for the householders kindly mark here carefully that only 'San kalpa Ahimsa' and 'Bhava Ahimsa' are forbidden i.e. killing by intention and feeling. For householder thus killing for sport or hunting is no doubt strictly forbidden. For the sake of defence and while one is disinterestedly working on the path of duty if any aggressor is killed or injured the

householder is not held guilty. If while doing an act of killing and injury under the above circumstances intention and feelings are unselfish and as per the dictates of duty, no bondage of the Karma will affect his soul.

As for example: A surgeon operates on a patient without the least feeling of doing injury or intention of killing the patient. Even if the patient is not saved by the surgeon he will not be bound by the Bandhan of the Karma. If a judge passes the sentence of death against a murderer in accordance with the law in all fairness and justice without feeling in the least attached to his action he will also not be bound by Karma and its effect thereafter on his future life. Similarly a military general or a King or the army are not affected and their acts of killing and injury to the aggressors committed with the above feeling and intention are not said to be acts of unjust violence.

Thus in brief violence by intention or feeling alone is Himsa. If one acts with the pure intention and feeling of non killing (Ahimsa) his actions will always be unbound because of the forced circumstances of life. Feeling of immense respect and responsibility for the life of all beings should always be kept awakened in mind in all dealings of everyday life as every being wants to live and has a goal to attain. We kill ourselves as soon as we intend to kill others; we corrupt ourselves as soon as we intend to corrupt others. Pramada or unmindfulness and attachment to sensual objects is the root of violence first with oneself and then outside in relation to other beings. Mindfulness or Viveka and non attachment to sensual objects is called the best Tapas or penance in Jainism. Thus the attitude of Jainism towards Ahimsa is based more on rational consciousness than on emotional compassion only and

this notion bears a great technical significance on the path of spiritual development or liberation of the soul. In Jain ethics there is detailed treatment of the principle of Ahimsa and its applicability on the basis of its famous Syadvada or Anekant logic.

It is wrong to say that Ahimsa or the principle of non violence is not applicable in everyday life. Researches in Indian history have shown that there have been very strong and powerful Jain rulers in India e.g. Bimbisara, Chaundraugupta, Mautva Kharvela the Great, Kumarapala and others. Historians have paid them tribute for their having established very powerful, just and benevolent administration in this country abide after the principle of the non violence of the householder. Mahatma Gandhi's practical life is an ideal of the practical working after the true conception of Jain Ahimsa. He being a strict follower of the high principle of non violence or Ahimsa of which the essential attributes are Vishwa maitri and love and justice to all beings has been regarded as an ideal saint. His dynamic spiritual love for the entire humanity and his spirit of service accommodation and adjustment after his strong belief on the principle of Ahimsa made him great. To a great extent his life itself is an interpretation of the principle of Ahimsa. The applicability of Ahimsa in life can be understood from the explanation given in Jain literature. But while going through the Jain literature the line of demarcation between the two aspects of life termed Ni chaya and Vyavahara i.e. for monks and householders respectively should be taken into consideration.

#### Realistic Faith

From the above outline of the fundamental principles of the Jain ethics and philosophy it will be seen that Jainism is more realistic than idealistic. Its philosophy of life is rational and scientific and

not dogmatic. The development of life is dependent on self-effort and not on the mercy of some superhuman power. The end or goal of life according to Jainism is beyond this material world. This world is an inn on way to Home. The main precaution in our travel through this world, is to travel as light as possible with as little of material limitations as can be hoped for (in order to reach our real Home—the shade of eternal peace and happiness). This kind of outlook about the world and life of non-violence, truth, non-stealing, abstinence, and non-possession naturally leaves little margin for greed and selfishness, which are the basis of all struggles and strife in this world.

Let me conclude by quoting a poem by Frank Mansell which represents the true spirit of Jainism.

### True Freedom

No man can bind another; he is bound  
By his own passion, his love and hate;  
Why curse thy lot? True liberty is found  
When lust is lost—this is the wise men  
state

Grasp thou the substance let the shadows  
go,

For they are such as no man can possess;  
Appearance mocks thee, drags thee to and  
from,

And makes thee slave to thy own lustfulness  
For each is bound according to his want,  
And as his own passion so his bond will be  
By our own lusts we in passion past,  
And lust o'ercome increases liberty  
Let all things that fail thee hope to rule fall;  
Conquer thy lust and thou art free of all.

### REAL RELIGION

(*Sri Sivami Sivananda*)

...bly for ...  
...a communion; in effect, begins with the opening of the eye of intuition. Intuition leads to God-realization. Religious discipline aims at the opening of the eye of intuition. Before this stage is reached there is contact with many diverse religious paths. The heart is seduced by worldly motives and religious differences arise. But really all religious quarrels are intellectual or emotional, resulting from clashes of worldly motives. If these motives are shunned, the religion of faith takes man sole to intuition along one of the paths built by saints and sages. The conditions of successful journey up to intuition on any path, whether it lies through Arabia of Mohammed or Jerusalem of Christ or the Gangetic Himalayan Rishikesh, are the same, i.e., Truth, Purity, Love, etc. They are like food and water for the traveller.

The only basis of true and lasting unity of all humanity is the religion of the heart. Religion of the heart is the religion of love. Men can be united only if they are free from jealousy, hatred and petty-mindedness. Heart must be purified first. Ethical culture is of paramount importance.

Self-realization eliminates fear altogether. Real religion is Self-realization. Real religion is the conquest of ... and death.

**Chapter Seven**

**CONFUCIANISM**

# Confucianism

Sri Swami Sivananda

Confucius was born in 551 BC in the feudal State of Lu, a portion of what is now the province of Shantung on the north-eastern seaboard of China. The name of Confucius in Chinese is Kung-fu-tse, i.e., the statesman-philosopher Kung. The first European scholars who visited China found that name hard to pronounce. So they tried Hui-nio Latin and called him Confucius.

There are three religions in China, viz., Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. Confucius and Lao-Tze, founder of Taoism, were contemporaries. They are sages and philosophers. They are not regarded as Saviors. Lao-Tze was fifty-three years older than Confucius. They met each other. Lao-Tze was 83 years old, more than twice the age of Confucius when they met. There was much difference in the ideas and beliefs of the two men as there was difference in their ages. The substance of their conversation has been handed down to us by the Chinese historians. Socrates and Buddha also were the contemporaries of Confucius.

Confucianism is not a religion in the customary sense. It has neither priesthood nor any monastic order. It existed in China long before the time of Confucius. In one of his recorded sayings he speaks of himself as a "transmitter" and not a "maker" or originator. He did not give a new religion to the world or a new ethical code. What he gave to the world was only a powerful restatement of the fundamental principles of human morality or ethics. He issued a new and improved edition of the old one. The moral code he framed was most admirable. It contained grand ethical truths.

Some say that Confucianism is no religion in reality, because Confucius is a philosopher, moralist, statesman and educationist, but no religiousist. They say that the thoughts and teachings of Confucius are ethical philosophy, political and educational principles, but not religious philosophy.

## Life of Confucius

Confucius was born in the Kung Clan. Confucius' father was Shu Liang Hsi. He was an officer who held an honourable position. He was of unusual stature and extraordinary strength and bravery.

Confucius's father died when he was in his third year. Confucius grew up in stature and in wisdom under the loving guidance and care of his mother. She gave him the best education possible in his days, namely, the study of his nation's history, poetry, philosophy and music.

He visited Lo-gang. Here he studied archaeology, music, the rights and ceremonies. He met here Lao-Tze. When he returned from the capital to Lu, he was acclaimed to be the leading scholar of the State.

Confucius' mother selected a wife for him. He married a girl from the State of Sung. He had a son and two daughters. He named his son Po Yu. We are indebted to the son of Po Yu for the most complete and philosophical account of Confucius' teachings.

At the age of 17 he completed his education in a modest village school. Then he secured his first employment, the task of keeping the granary account for the Ch'i family in the ducal state of Lu.

He was very industrious and honest. He spent his spare time in studying and giving instructions to the boys who played around the grasslands, where the cattle were pastured. In this casual way there grew up a band of disciples, who followed him devotedly through his life-time and made his fame immortal by their records of his teachings. He had a ardent enthusiasm for authority and discipline and great admiration for the past. His admonitions tended to be ethical rather than religious.

#### Ethical Teacher

Confucius was an eminent ethical teacher with no political aim. His great object was to reform the kingdom by means of the moral principles of ancient times.

In the book *Analests*, a collection of his sayings, he speaks of himself at different stages of life. "At fifteen my mind was bent on learning. At thirty I stood firm. At forty I was free from doubt or delusion. At fifty I understood the will of God; I knew the decrees of Heaven. At sixty my ears were receptive of the truth. At seventy I could follow the promptings of my heart without transgressing the boundaries of right."

He held the high offices of Minister of Works and Minister of Crime, or Chief Justice, in his native State. In 501 B.C. in his fiftieth year, he was appointed Governor of Chung Tu district. His administration was very successful. At fifty-one he was Prime Minister.

He produced a marvellous change for good. "A thing dropped in the streets was not picked up. People were loyal and had good faith. Women were chaste." Confucius was worshipped by the people. He is the hero of all moral aspiration in China.

The wonderful achievements of Confucius roused the fear and jealousy of a

neighbour, the Marquis of Chi. Confucius was obliged to leave Lu. He became a wanderer from State to State. He thought that one of the Princes whom he visited would enable him to put his principles of Government into practice. He was forced to go into exile with some faithful followers for 13 years. He took to teaching during this period. He gradually attracted a large number of disciples.

He was recalled to his native State, but he refused. He passed away when he was aged 73.

#### Characteristic

He had a deep study of his country's literature and history. He had a strong conviction that just and righteous rulers only could protect the State and make the people virtuous. His ideal was to create a race of wise rulers like King Jao-sha. It was with this view he wandered from State to State in search of a good ruler.

His disciples freed him from fore-gone conclusions, arbitrary determinations, obstinacy and egoism. He would not talk with his disciples about extraordinary things, feats of strength, rabidious disorder and spiritual beings. He frequently conversed with them about the books of poetry, history and the rules of propriety. He said to them that there were three things to which the greatest caution was required, viz., fasting as preparatory to sacrifice, going to war and the treatment of disease. He insisted on their cultivating ethics, loyalty and truthfulness. He seldom dwelt on three things, viz., the propitiatory, perfect and the decrees of Heaven.

Confucius devoted himself much to the study of things human. He paid great attention to actual life. He never talked much about Heaven, natural phenomena, gods, etc. One of his disciples Ch'Lu said "O venerable Master! How can I serve the gods?" He replied "You do not

know how to serve man, yet, how can you ask about serving gods?" He again asked "Adorable Teacher! Please tell me all about Death." Confucius replied "Beloved Chi-Lu! You do not know much about life; yet how can you expect to know about Death?" But Confucius never dangled the existence of Heaven, or gods.

Confucius devoted himself to the improvement of society. He ever thought of the well-being of the society. He tried his level best to contribute much to the social welfare. *The Analects*, or collection of sayings, treats mainly of social welfare, human peace and harmony in society. He strived his every nerve to giving moral training to the people. He laid very great emphasis on cultivation of ethical virtues. He tried to remove the discordant or disturbing elements in society. He had a strong conviction that if the superiors and elders had a blameless character, others would follow them and there would be love and universal peace everywhere. As these social thoughts ever occupied his mind, he had no time to discuss on gods and life after death. Moreover, he did not find it necessary also to dwell on these subjects.

#### Books

*The Analects* or conversations of Confucius. They are his discourses with his disciples and enquirers. There have been many schools of thought and commentators on *The Analects*.

The following four books, viz., *Te-Hen*<sup>ab</sup>, the great learning or learning for adults, *Chung Yung*, the doctrine of the Mean, *Lun Yu*, the Confucian *Analects* in twenty books, and *Meng Tzu*, the Philosophy of Mencius are intimately concerned with the principles of Confucianism.

*Tai-Hsueh* is a politico-ethical treatise. *Chung Yung* was written by Kung Ch'iu's

grandson of Confucius. It is a purely philosophical book. It treats of some general principles that concern the nature of mean and right conduct. *Lun Yu*, the Confucian *Analects*, contains sayings and conversations between the Teacher and his disciples. *Meng Tzu*, the philosophy of Mencius, is written by an ardent Confucianist. It deals with various questions raised by his disciples. It gives advice to rulers of feudal States. It treats of psychology, political theory and economics.

#### Sayings

Many of his short sayings are admirable in their pith and sagacity. What could be better than these:

"Learning without thought is labour lost; thought without learning is perilous."

"It is only the truly virtuous who can love or hate others."

"To be poor without murmuring is difficult; to be rich without being proud is easy."

"Let a good man teach the people seven years, and they may then likewise be employed in war."

"To lead an uninstructed people to war is to throw them away."

"What the superior man seeks is in himself; what the small man seeks is in others. The superior man is dignified, but does not wrangle; he is social, but not a partisan. He does not promote a man simply because of his words, nor does he put good words aside because of the man."

"The love of virtue should be like the love of beauty—from an inward constraint."

"Have sufficient self-control even to judge of others in comparison with yourself, and to act towards them as you would wish them to act to you. This is what one may call the 'doctrine of humanity,' and there is nothing beyond this."

"The way to become a superior man is to set one's affections on what is right, to

love learning, which is the source of knowledge and virtue, with which nothing else can be compared. When righteousness is pursued with sincerity and a mind free from self-deception, the heart becomes rectified.

Up to this stage the individual has been busy only with his own improvement, but the cultivation of the person influences primarily those around him, and ultimately the whole empire. Everyone therefore, should carefully cultivate his person, having a due regard for others besides himself. Each man must guard his words and watch his conduct. He must fly from sin; that is honest and disquieting, and must take benevolence as his dwelling place, righteousness as his road, propriety as his gait, wisdom as his lamp, and faithfulness as his charm. Dignity, reverence, loyalty and faithfulness make up the qualities of a cultivated man. His dignity separates him from the crowd, being reverent he is beloved, being loyal, he is submitted to, and, being faithful, he is trusted."

#### Ideal of Perfection

The various sayings of Confucius presented the attributes of the superior man. Confucius asked his disciples to admire the superior man to emulate him. He said that every human being cherishes the aspiration to become a superior man, superior to his fellow-beings, superior to his own past and present self.

*Purpose.* The superior man learns in order to attain to the utmost of his principles.

*Poise.* The superior man in his thought does not go out of his place.

*Earnestness.* The superior man in everything puts forth his utmost endeavours.

*Thoroughness.* The superior man bends his attention to what is radical. That being

established all practical courses naturally grow up.

*Sincerity.* Is it not his sincerity which distinguishes a superior man?

*Truthfulness.* What the superior man requires is that in what he says there may be nothing inaccurate.

*Purity of thought and action.* The superior man must be watchful over himself when alone.

*Loyalty of truth.* The superior man is anxious lest he should not get truth, he is anxious lest poverty comes upon him.

*Rectitude.* The superior man thinks of virtue, the ordinary man thinks of comfort.

*Prudence.* The superior man wishes to be slow in his words and earnest in his conduct.

*Composure.* The superior man may indeed have to endure want, but the ordinary man, when in want gives way to unbounded license.

*Fearlessness.* The superior man has neither anxiety nor fear.

*Ease and dignity.* The superior man has dignified esse without pride, the ordinary man has pride without dignified esse.

*Firmness.* Looked at from a distance, the superior man appears stern, when approached he is mild, when he is heard to speak, his language is firm and decided.

*Capacity.* The superior man cannot be known in little matters, but may be entrusted with great concerns.

*Openness.* The faults of the superior man are like the sun and the moon. He has his faults and all men see them. His changes again and all men look up to him.

*Benevolence.* The superior man seeks to develop the admirable qualities in man, and does not seek to develop the evil qualities. The ordinary man does the opposite.

*Broad mindedness* The superior man honours talents and virtue and bears with all. He praises the good and pities the incompetent.

*Moderation* The superior man conforms with the path of the middle course.

*Reserve power* That wherein the superior man cannot be equalled is simply this his work which other men cannot see.

Confucius speaks of the superior or the ideal man thus "The superior man is catholic and not a partisan. He does what is proper to the position in which he is. He does not wish to go beyond it. He finds himself in no position in which he is not himself."

"The scholar considers honesty and good faith to be his coat of mail and helmet, propriety and righteousness to be his shield and buckler. He walks along bearing over his head benevolence, he dwells holding righteousness in his arms before him, the government may be violently oppressive but he does not change his course such is the way in which he maintains himself."

#### Teachings

Confucius gave a great impetus to education and learning and the study of the rules of right conduct with a view to their practical application. According to his teachings man's chief end is to know and make the most of himself as a member of society. He preached to his disciples and the people the principles of good life and social harmony.

His teaching was largely concerned with the problems of good government. He said 'The ruler himself should be virtuous just honest and dutiful. A virtuous ruler is like the Pole star which by keeping its place makes all other stars to revolve round it. As is the ruler so will be the subjects.'

What was Confucius' idea of virtue?

His word for it was Jen. The proper understanding of his ethical doctrine chiefly depends on the implications of Jen. There is no single English equivalent of Jen. In all its shades of meaning The essence of all his teachings may be summed up under this one word Jen. The nearest equivalent to this difficult word is 'social virtue'. All those virtues which help to maintain social harmony and peace like benevolence, charity, magnanimity, sincerity, respectfulness, altruism, diligence, loving kindness, goodness are included in Jen.

One of the disciples asked 'O Venerable Master! Please tell me what constitutes social virtue?' Confucius replied 'Loving others.' Another disciple asked 'Master, is there any one maxim which should be acted upon throughout one's own life?' He replied 'Do not do to others what you do not wish them to do to you.' A chief disciple of Confucius said 'The single principle that ran throughout the teachings of my Master is loyalty to oneself and charity to one's neighbour.'

Confucius said 'A virtuous man has three awes (1) awe for Heaven's decree, (2) awe for great men (3) awe for saints' words. When worshipping God one must feel as if He were visibly present.'

The teaching of Confucius is that the entire world and every being are constantly changing and that the most essential aspect for human life is the present Reality.

Confucius held that society was made up of five relationships viz., those of husband and wife of parent and child, of elder and younger brothers or generally of elders and youngsters of ruler and minister or subject and of friend and friend. A country would be well governed when all the parties performed their parts aright in these relationships. Confucius said

'There was Tao (a way or road of righteous

ness) only when fathers were fathers, when sons were sons, when rulers were rulers, and when ministers were ministers.

Confucius laid great stress on the cultivation of character, purity of heart and conduct. He exhorted the people to develop a good character, first, which is a priceless jewel, which is the best of all virtues.

### Self-Culture

The nature of man, according to Confucius, is fundamentally good—inclined towards goodness. Perfection of goodness can only be found in sages and saints. Every man should attempt to reach the ideal by leading a virtuous life, by possessing a very noble character, and by doing his duty unselfishly with sincerity and truthfulness. He who is endowed with a good character and divine virtues is a Chun-tzu or princely type of man. The princely man sticks to virtue; the inferior man clings to material comfort. The princely man is just; the inferior man expects rewards and favours. The princely man is dignified, noble, magnanimous, humble; the inferior man is mean, proud, crooked and arrogant.

In the *Great Learning* Confucius revealed the process, step by step, by which self-development is attained and by which it flows over into the common life to serve the State and bless mankind. The order of development, Confucius set forth as follows:—

- Investigation phenomena
- Learning
- Sincerity
- Rectitude of purpose
- Self-development
- Family discipline
- Local self-government
- Universal self-government

*In the ancients*, he said "When they wished to exemplify illustrious virtue throughout the empire, first ordered well their States. Desiring to maintain well their States, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families they first cultivated themselves. Wishing to cultivate themselves they first rectified their purpose. Wishing to rectify their purposes they first sought to think sincerely. Wishing to think sincerely they first extended their knowledge as widely as possible. This they did by investigation of things."

"By investigating of things their knowledge became extensive; their knowledge being extensive their thoughts became sincere; their thoughts being sincere their purposes were rectified; their purposes being rectified they cultivated themselves; they being cultivated their families were regulated, their states rightly governed; their states being rightly governed the empire was thereby tranquil and prosperous."

### Concluding

Confucius has rendered immortal the sixth century B.C. He was a born ruler of men. He would have shone as one of the world's greatest monarchs, if circumstances had been favourable. He had a highly developed moral sense and a profound realization of the supreme importance of morals in human life. His greatness has been universally recognized for many centuries. He is held in the highest reverence by hundreds of millions of the world's inhabitants.

Confucius was a great Chinese teacher and social reformer. He lived in an age of disorder, disquiet, disharmony, dissensions and feudal wars. He is regarded as the Father of Chinese culture.

He has had a great part in moulding the history of China and his influence is to this day a dominant factor in the public and private life of that country.

He excelled as a diligent student of antiquity. He described himself as having been born without knowledge which he had to acquire through earnest communion with the past.

Confucius possessed a commanding and lovable personality. He has been a model and an inspiration to the scholars and thinkers of his nation for 2400 years. He nobly deserves the words which often appear above his altar 'The teacher of ten

thousand generations'.

At the end of a popular history of him occur these lines —

'Confucius! Confucius! How great was Confucius!

Before him there was no Confucius.  
Since him there has been no other,  
Confucius! Confucius! How great was  
Confucius!'

Confucius is still revered by millions of people. The majority of China's six hundred millions are still Confucianist at heart.

Glory to Confucius the great moralist, statesman and social reformer of China!

## Wisdom of Confucius

Collected by Sri Swami Sivananda

- 1 The world is only a baiting place
- 2 To plan affairs rests with men, to complete affairs rests with God
- 3 By controlling the anger of a moment you may avoid the remorse of a lifetime
- 4 Blame yourself as you would blame others. Excuse others as you would excuse yourself!
- 5 Obedience is better than reverence
- 6 Girls and servants are the most difficult people to handle. If you treat them familiarly they become disrespectful. If you keep them at a distance, they resent it.
- 7 To walk in the path of virtue for twenty years is not enough. To do evil for a single day is too much.
- 8 A wise man will be slow to speak but quick to act.
- 9 Sincerity is the end and beginning of things. Without sincerity there would be nothing. Sincerity is the way of God. It is the way of heaven. Practise it wisely.
- 10 The three secrets of happiness are—to see no evil, to hear no evil and to do no evil.
- 11 The heart of a wise man should resemble a mirror which reflects every object without being sullied by anything.
- 12 The best of man is more dangerous than mountains and rivers more difficult to understand than heaven itself.
- 13 Firmness and resolution, simplicity and gentleness of speech are qualities that make for perfect virtue.
- 14 He who does not know the Divine Law cannot become a noble man. He who does not know the laws of right conduct cannot form his character. He who does not know the force of words cannot know the man.
- 15 The enlightened are free from doubt the virtuous from anxiety, and the brave from fear.
- 16 O' sit the parts of man's body there is none more excellent than the pupil of the eye. The pupil cannot be used

to hide a man's wickedness. If within the heart all be correct, the pupil is bright. If within the heart all be not correct, the pupil is dull. Listen to a man's word and look at the pupil of his eyes. How can a man conceal his character?

7 True goodness is loving your fellow-men. True wisdom is knowing your fellow men.

8 With coarse food to eat, water to drink and the bended arm as a pillow, the sage is the most happy man in this world.

19 Noise is not in the market-place, nor quiet in the forest, but in the hearts of men.

20 Better do kind acts near home than walk a thousand miles to burn incense.

21 When you know to know that you know, and when you do not know, to know that you do not know—that is true knowledge.

22 Sorrow and trouble bring life, ease and pleasure bring death.

23 While still unable to do your duty to the living, how can you do your duty to the dead? While you do not know life, how can you know death?

24 The enlightened mind is its own heaven; the unenlightened mind is its own hell.

## Analects of Confucius

Translated by Charles A. Wong

See what a man does. Mark his motives. Examine in what things he rests. How can a man conceal his character?

To see what is right and not to do it is lack of courage.

When agreements are made according to what is right, what is spoken can be made good. When respect is shown according to what is proper, one keeps from shame and disgrace.

He who aims to be a man of complete virtue does not seek to gratify his appetite in his food, nor in his dwelling-place does he seek the apittance of ease, he is earnest in what he is doing and careful in his speech, he frequents the company of men of principle so that he may be rectified. Such a person may be said indeed to love to learn.

Now the man of perfect virtue, wishing to be established himself seeks also to establish others, wishing to be enlarged himself he seeks also to enlarge others.

A youth is to be regarded with respect. How do we know that his future will not be equal to our present?

Hold faithfulness and sincerity as first principles. Have no friends not equal to yourself. When you have faults, do not fear to abandon them.

The superior man has neither anxiety nor fear. When internal examination discovers nothing wrong, what is there to be anxious about what is there to fear?

The man of distinction is solid and straightforward, and loves righteousness. He examines people's words and looks at their countenances. He is anxious to humble himself to others. Such a man will be distinguished in his class.

Faithfully admonish your friend, and skillfully lead him on. If you find him impracticable, stop. Do not disgrace your self.

The superior man is easy to serve and difficult to please. If you try to please him

In any way which is not accordant to right, he will not be pleased. But in his employment of men, he uses them according to their capacity. The inferior man is difficult to serve and easy to please. If you try to please him though it be in a way which is not accordant to right, he may be pleased. But in his employment of men, he wishes them to be equal to everything.

The determined scholar and the man of virtue will not seek to live at the expense of injuring their virtue. They will even sacrifice their lives to preserve their virtue complete.

Fine words and an insouciant appearance are seldom associated with virtue.

To put the people to death without having instructed them this is called cruelty. To require from them suddenly the full tale of work without having given them warning this is called oppression. To issue orders as if without urgency at

first and when the time comes, to insist on them with severity this is called injury. And generally, in giving pay or rewards to men, to do it in a stingy way this is called acting the part of a mere official.

There is the love of being benevolent without the love of learning the beclouding here leads to foolish simplicity. There is the love of knowing without the love of learning the beclouding here leads to dissipatio[n] of mind. There is the love of being sincere without the love of learning the beclouding here leads to an injurious disregard of consequences. There is the love of straightforwardness without the love of learning the beclouding here leads to rudeness. There is the love of boldness without the love of learning the beclouding here leads to insubordination. There is the love of firmness without the love of learning the beclouding here leads to extravagant conduct.

## Sayings of Confucius

Translated by Sri Charles A. Wong

Things that are done, it is needless to speak about things that have had their course, it is needless to remonstrate about things that are past, it is needless to blame

Respectfulness without the rules of propriety becomes ludicrous bustle carefulness without the rules of propriety becomes timidity straightforwardness without the rules of propriety becomes rudeness.

He who requires much from himself and little from others will keep himself from being the object of resentment.

When a man is not in the habit of saying "What shall I think of this? I can indeed do nothing with him."

There are three friendships which are

advantageous and three which are injurious. Friendship with the upright, friendship with the sincere and friendship with the man of much observation are advantageous. Friendship with the man of suspicion is friendship with the insinuatingly envious and friendship with the quick tongued are injurious.

There are three errors in which people encumber. They may speak when it does not come to them to speak this is called rashness. They may not speak when it comes to them to speak this is called concealment. They may speak without looking at the countenance of the superior this is called blindness.

The superior man has nine things which

In any way which is not accordant to right, he will not be pleased. But in his employment of men, he uses them according to their capacity. The inferior man is difficult to serve, and easy to please. If you try to please him, though it be in a way which is not accordant to right, he may be pleased. But in his employment of men, he wishes them to be equal to everything.

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There is the love of being benevolent without the love of learning: the beclouding here leads to foolish simplicity. There is the love of knowing without the love of learning: the beclouding here leads to dissipation of mind. There is the love of being sincere without the love of learning: the beclouding here leads to an injurious disregard of consequences. There is the love of straightforwardness without the love of learning: the beclouding here leads to rudeness. There is the love of boldness without the love of learning: the beclouding here leads to insubordination. There is the love of firmness without the love of learning: the beclouding here leads to extreme conduct.

## Sayings of Confucius

Translated by Sri Charles A. Wong

Things that are done, it is needless to speak about; things that have had their course, it is needless to remonstrate about; things that are past, it is needless to blame.

Respectfulness without the rules of propriety becomes ludicrous hustle, carefulness without the rules of propriety becomes timidity, straightforwardness without the rules of propriety becomes indecisiveness.

He who requires much from himself and little from others, will keep himself from being the object of resentment.

When a man is not in the habit of saying, 'What shall I think of this?' I can indeed do nothing with him.

There are three friendships which are

advantageous and three which are injurious. Friendship with the upright, friendship with the sincere, and friendship with the man of much observation are advantageous. Friendship with the man of specious arts, friendship with the insinuatingly sly, and friendship with the glib-tongued are injurious.

There are three errors to which people succumb. They may speak when it does not come to them to speak: this is called rashness. They may not speak when it comes to them to speak: this is called concealment. They may speak without looking at the countenance of the superior: this is called blindness.

The superior man has nine things which

are subjects with him of thoughtful consideration. In regard to the use of his eyes, he is anxious to see clearly. In regard to the use of his ears he is anxious to hear distinctly. In regard to his countenance, he is anxious that it should be beotqn. In regard to his demeanour, he is anxious that it should be respectful. In regard to his speech, he is anxious that it shnuld be sincere. In regard to his action, he is anxious that it should be reverently careful. In regard to what he doubts about, he is anxious to enquire others. When he is angry, he thinks of the difficulties his anger may involve him in. When he sees gain to be got, he thinks of righteousness.

When the multitude hate a man, it is necessary to examine into the case. When the multitude like a man, it is necessary to examine into the case.

Is there one word which may serve as a rule of practice for all one's life? Is not reciprocity such a word? What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others.

- Specious words confound virtue. Want of forbearance in small matters confounds great plans.

The requisites of a government are that there be sufficiency of food, sufficiency of military equipment, and the confidence of the people in their ruler.

## The Philosophy of Confucius and Taoism

Sri Tan Ee Leong  
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The subject we are to discuss is: The Philosophy of Confucius and Taoism. Mark the word "philosophy" as distinct from religion. The teachings of Confucius and his disciples are called Confucianism. Though at certain times it was turned into a State Religion, Confucianism is essentially a moral code, a philosophy of life to the world. Taoism, however, is different. Though started as a philosophy, it was later developed in two entirely different ways as:

(a) The pure philosophy of Lao-tze and Chuang-tze, and (b) the Tao Religion of Chang Tien-Sze (Chang Tan-Lin of the Han Dynasty) which began to flourish about the time Buddhism came to China and it has persisted to this day.

so as to distinguish it from Taoism, the religion.

In Chinese, the distinction between the two is clear. The philosophy of Tao is known as Tao Hsueh and the religion as Tao Chiao. Hsueh means to learn or study; Chiao means to teach. So when you learn about Tao, it is the philosophy. But when you start to teach or to preach, it becomes religion.

### Chinese Civilization

The history of Chinese thought may conveniently be divided into three main periods:

(1) the Sinic Age, when the native religions and philosophies of China held sway. These are called Stoicism

(2) The Buddhist Age from A.D. 300 to 1100—a period of 800 years.

Dr. Hu Shih suggests to call the philosophy of Lao-tze by the name of "Laoism,"

- (3) The Age of the Chinese Renaissance, which began with the rise of secular Neo-Confucian thought in the 11th century (Song) and lasted till the 17th century (end of Ming).

The civilization of ancient China was a combination of the Eastern culture of the Shang Dynasty (1766-1122 B.C.) and the Western culture of the Chou Dynasty (1122-221 B.C.). Ancient Chinese beliefs were a product of this combination. They contained the following elements —

- (1) The worship of the ancestors,
  - (2) The worship of the forces of nature, from which is probably developed the worship of Tien or Heaven, as the Supreme God,
  - (3) A belief in the idea of retribution of good and evil, and
  - (4) A general belief in the efficacy of divination in various forms.

Harassed by the barbarian tribes from the North-West, the Ch'nu capital was removed in 771 B.C. from Sian eastward to Luyang in Honan. The imperial power was on the decline. So the feudal states assumed more and more independence, and contended with each other for political ascendancy, territorial expansion and economic prosperity. A succession of wars with the resultant sufferings set people thinking. They recorded their feelings in the following poems —

- (1) "Let it be !  
God hath done it  
Wherefore should I complain ?"  
(2) "The people are now in peril  
They look to Heaven, and see it is dark  
and dumb  
It is determined,  
And there is none whom it conquers  
not  
O Great God !  
Whom do you hate ?"

- (3) "The great God is inconstant in His  
kindness,  
And He has spread famine and des-  
troyed the nations  
The great God is wrathful He  
thinks not nor plans  
Let alone the guilty ones who are  
deatroyed How about the innocent  
ones who perish with them?"

This Age of the Poets was followed by the Age of the Philosophers. Of the latter, there arose within 100 years, between 570 and 490 B.C., the three great leaders, Lao-tze, Confucius and Mo-tze. These three laid the foundations for all Chinese philosophies which by the 3rd century B.C. had fairly matured.

Lao-tze was a relief in religion and a revolutionary in philosophy, Confucius was a humanist and agnostic, while Mencius tried to purify the old Sinitic religion and give it a new significance. Here we are concerned with the philosophies of Lao-tze and Confucius and will deal with them briefly in turn.

I will take Lacaze first partly because he came on the scene first.

Tepism

The Taoists claimed as their founders Lao-tze and Huang Ti the Yellow Emperor who had reigned 2000 years before Lao-tze. This seems rather far-fetched. Nevertheless it is true that Lao-tze was not the first teacher of 'Tao,' but he is supposed to have left us the earliest record of such teachings in the Book of Tao Tao Teh King (or Ching). He was a contemporary of Confucius though older by 20 years or more. Next came Chuangtze and Liehtze more than 200 years later who brilliantly expounded and developed the old Master's theories.

The short poems I quoted just now gave some indication as to the sceptical and rebellious tendencies of the age, and

Lao-tze was a good representative. "Heaven and Earth are unkind," he declared, "they treat all creatures like grass and dogs. Sages are unkind, they treat all men like grass and dogs." In this connection it should be borne in mind that the earliest Chinese sages were all rulers—the wise kings and ministers of the past, whom Confucianists held up as paragons or models of perfection.

Lao-tze protested against what he considered as the evils of his time—the multiplication of law and regulations, the growth of luxury, the love of name and power and other evils following rapid material progress.

He advocated "Tao" which literally means 'The Way.' The Tao Teh King opened with this description of his Tao.

'The Tao that can be told of  
Is not the absolute Tao,  
The names that can be given  
Are not absolute names.'

The nameless is the origin of  
Heaven and Earth,  
The named is the Mother of All  
Things'"  
'Tao is all-pervading,  
And Its use is inexhaustible!'

Then 'Exalt not the wise  
So that the people shall not  
scheme and contend  
Prize not rare objects,  
So that the people shall not steal  
Shut out from sight the things of  
desire,  
So that the people's hearts shall not  
be disturbed.'

From the above quotations it will be seen that Tao represents the first cause, the Unconditioned or the Absolute. Lao-tze advocated a return to the simple and naturalistic. The best government in his opinion, would be the least governing and the best society would come nearest to

unadorned simplicity and native innocence.

#### Naturalistic Philosophy

This naturalistic philosophy of Lao-tze was further developed by his followers. The conception of nature, unfolding itself without plan and without fail, led to speculations on problems of progress and natural evolution, and the exaltation of nature and the natural gave rise to the school of individualism, which placed the freedom of the individual above everything else. In politics, this line of naturalistic thinking furnished the basis of a political philosophy of non-resistance and "non-action." This did not mean doing nothing, but only suppression of personal caprice in favour of natural order and objective necessity.

Such doctrines, especially when applied to politics sounded very strange to many people then, though they would have been applauded by the modern advocates of laissez faire. Believe it or not, his policy was actually put to the test and proved a great success. It was adopted by General Ts'ao Ts'an, who became Prime Minister of the newly-founded Han Dynasty in 193 B.C. It proved so successful that it was continued by his successors. Seventy years of such rule gave the war-taxed country the much needed rest, and resulted in great prosperity and wealth for both the people and the Government.

The same political philosophy was the foundation of the theories of Law in the 4th and 3rd centuries B.C.

#### Chuangtze

Chuangtze was to Lao-tze what Mencius (a contemporary of his) was to Confucius, and St Paul to Jesus Christ. He believed in an immortal Soul, as distinct from the mind which dies with the body. It emanates from the great impersonal Soul of the Universe, with which it finally reunites after passing through a series of different

states to conditioned being. To attain this goal of supreme bliss, he suggests abstract contemplation of Tao. But, unlike the Buddhist he does not believe in manifestation of animal instincts or the life of a hermit as the highest form of virtue, for "the perfect men can transcend the limits of the human and yet not withdraw from the world," claims Chuangtze.

There is so much similarity between Taoism and Vedantic thought that scholars speculate upon the possibility of Chuangtze having been influenced by Buddhistic ideas which might have infiltrated into China before official recognition of Buddhism.

The philosophy of Tan indirectly created one of the three largest religions of China, whose doctrines and practices, however would have made Lao-tze and Chuangtze turn in their graves.

The direct effects of the philosophy upon the peoples are, in the opinion of Dr Hu Shih, twofold:

It has led to laziness and unprogressiveness as represented by Chinese Epicureans, and on the other hand, it has produced a general attitude of indifference towards vicissitudes in life, thus enabling the people to endure the hardships from recurring famines and floods and continuous misrule.

So much for Taoism or Laoism. Let us turn our attention now to Confucianism.

#### Confucianism

The teachings of the early Confucian school are recorded in the famous four books, namely—

(1) Lun Yu or the Analects of Confucius,

(2) Dah Hsueh or the Great Learning, propounded by his disciple, Tsengtze,

(3) Chung Yung or Doctrine of the Mean, by his grandson, Tze Hsia, a disciple of Tsengtze, and

(4) Book of Mencius, a disciple of Tze Hsia.

As the four books, especially the first, are widely read, I will only touch a few points therein:

(1) Confucius, as pointed out earlier, was a humanist and agnostic. He did not like in talk of strange things force, revolt, or spirits. His attitude towards spirits and ghosts was to respect them but to keep them at a distance.

(2) He believed in fate.

Recounting different stages in his life from the age of fifteen upwards, he remarked that at 50 he knew the Decree of Heaven. Once when besieged and threatened by the tribesmen of Kang, he remained calm and unruffled. However, his resignation to fate did not amount to the pessimistic fatalism of Chuangtze, against which all human effort seemed helpless. Upon this phase of Taoism, the following criticism was made by Hsun-tse, a leading Confucianist of the 3rd Century B.C.—

"You glorify Nature and meditate on her;

Why not domesticate and regulate her? You follow nature and sing her praise, Why not control her course and use it? Therefore I say To neglect man's effort and speculate about nature, Is to misunderstand the facts of the Universe."

(3) Original Goodness of Man's Nature

While Hsun-tse and his followers (like the Christians) believed in the original Badness of Man's Nature, the Confucians generally believed in its goodness, and referred to the infant as a model of innocence and purity. However, some dissentients like Kao-tze argued with Mencius that man by nature was neither good nor bad. It was like water, that

would flow to the East or to the West as it was directed in its course.

#### (4) Name.

Unlike Lao-tze, Confucius was very particular about name. "The gentleman hates to die without making a name." "Before doing anything, the name must be properly fixed. When the name is not proper, what you say about the project is not smooth, and then it cannot be carried out successfully."

#### (5) Moral Regeneration and Rearmament.

The time of Confucius was marked by political and moral lassitude—so much so, that regicide or patricide was not uncommon occurrence. Confucius therefore preached moral regeneration and rearmament. He clearly defined the five human relationships such as between sovereign and subject, father and son, husband and wife, elder and younger brothers, and between friends. He laid special emphasis upon filial piety and loyalty of the subject. This doctrine was carried to the extent that when the father ordered the son to die, he must die or be guilty of filial impurity, and that when the sovereign ordered the subject to die, he must die also or be guilty of disloyalty. In course of time this led to acts of excessive tyranny. It was to counteract such evil effects that Mencius, a disciple of Confucius' grandson, uttered these startling words about 2,200 years ago.—

"First in importance are the people, next comes the state, and the sovereign is insignificant."

"If the sovereign treats his subjects like his limbs, they will treat him like

their vital organs. If the sovereign treats his subjects like the weeds of the field, they will treat him like bandits and the enemy."

#### (6) Popularizing Knowledge

Before closing, let me refer to one more achievement of Confucius which has had far-reaching effects. In ancient China, as in other countries, higher learning and official posts were confined to privileged families only. This rule was first broken by Confucius. He had 72 disciples and 3,000 students, whom he sent out all over the states to become officials, to trade or teach others. This example was followed by other teachers, with the result that education and knowledge became more widespread, and official positions open to people, high and low.

#### Bibliography

For books on Taoism and Confucianism, the "Wisdom of the East" Series is a good starter.

For further reading:—

*Analecias of Confucius*, by Arthur Waley.

*All the Four Books*, with original text and translation, by James Legge.

*The Way and Its Power*, by Arthur Waley.

*Complete works of Chuangtze*, by Prof. H.A. Giles.

*Book of Tao*, with translation, by Lin Yutang.

*The Spirit of Chinese Philosophy*, by Prof. Fang Yu-Lan.

*History of Chinese Philosophy—Part I*, by Dr. Hu Shih

(The last one was printed in Chinese 30 years ago. It must have been translated since)\*

A house may be burned by smouldering fire, when a fierce flame would have shown itself and have been easily extinguished.

—Chinese Proverb.

\*A Paper read at the Conspectus of Religions and Philosophies held under the auspices of the Pure Life Society, Malaya.

## Mo-Tze and Ahimsa

Prof. Chou Hsiang-Kuang  
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From the sixth century B.C. (Confucius was born in 551 and died in 479 B.C.) to the time of Emperor Wu-ti of the Han dynasty who canonized the Classics of the Confucian School, it was a period of great cultural progress in China. During this period the Confucian School was only one of many schools of thought which ran parallel to each other. Besides the Confucian School, there were the following schools: (1) Taoism, (2) Mohism, (3) the Sophists, and (4) the Legalists.

Mohism was founded by Mo-Tze who is one of the most important figures in Chinese history, a man whose name was constantly linked with that of Confucius. He was born in 468 and died in 376 B.C. He seems to have been an officer of distinction in the State of Sung. He was skilful in maintaining military defences. Huai Nan-Tze says "Confucius and Mo-Tze practised the teachings of the ancient Sages and were lectured in all the discourses on the Six Disciplines." But there are many places in Mo-Tze's writings where he stands opposed to the Confucian School, where the ideals of the latter differed from his own. Confucius "tried to be correct in righteousness, without considering whether it was profitable, and also he tried to be pure in their principles, without considering whether this would bring material return." Both Confucius and Mo-Tze worked tirelessly to rescue the world from its ills.

Anything must be of profit to the country and the people before it can be said to possess practical value, and it is the wealth and populousness of a country, Mo Tze believed, which constitute its greatest profit. Although luxury and adornment are of no benefit to the country and the people,

yet at the same time they are not its greatest sources of harm but rather the incessant fighting of the people and the States among themselves, was caused, so Mo-Tze held, by the fact that men do not love one another. Mo-Tze, therefore, was preaching the doctrine of Love. The practice of universal Love benefits not only the one who is loved, but also the one who loves, on the principle of reciprocity.

Mo-Tze said:

"Heaven wishes people to love and benefit each other, and does not want people to hate and hurt each other. Why? Because Heaven loves all and benefits all."

"How to follow the will and the wish of Heaven? That is to love all people and Heaven."

Mo-Tze thought that the great benefits to the world come from men practising universal Love and that its major calamities come from their fighting with one another. Thus he said

"How were chaos and calamities caused? They were caused by people not loving each other. A thief loves his own house and does not love others' houses; he therefore steals in other people's houses for the benefit of his own house. A murderer loves his own body and does not love the body of another, he therefore murders others for the benefit of his own body.... In the case of officers, each loves his own family and does not love other families, they therefore exploit other families for the benefit of their own families. In the case of rulers, each loves his own country and does not love others' countries; they therefore attack others' countries for the benefit of their own countries..... If all look upon others' houses as their own houses, who

will steal? If all look upon others' bodies as their own bodies, who will murder? If all look upon others' families as their own families, who will exploit? If all look upon others' country as their own country, who will attack? ... Therefore, when all love each other, there will be peace, and when all hate each other, there will be chaos and calamity."

Again:

"To kill one man is certainly wrongful and the murderer must receive death-punishment, accordingly, to kill ten men is ten times wrongful and the murderer has a tenfold punishment to his due .... Now the greatest wrong is to attack a country but if the attacker receives no punishment, is it right?"

Again:

"Which are the greater woes among the evils of the world? They are those actions of the big countries attacking the small countries, of the big families disturbing the small families, and those deeds of the strong robbing the weak, of the group of the many oppressing the group of the few, of the clever deceiving the dull, of the high class scorning the low. These are the greatest evils in the world."

Therefore, Mo-Tze thought we should condemn warfare. He says, "Why does the government deprive the people of their opportunities and benefits which are due to them, through war? It has been answered, 'I covet the lands of another and the possessions obtainable through conquest, and therefore I do it!'" Mo-Tze said, "But when we consider the victory as such, there is nothing useful about it. When we consider the possessions obtained through it, it does not even make up for what has been lost."

I remember that Bentham held that the purpose of morality and law was to procure the greatest happiness for the greatest number,—a doctrine shared by Mo-Tze.

Although Mo-Tze held that the doctrine of universal love is the only way to save the world, he did not believe that men, through their original natures, can love one another, because man's nature is like pure silk, and its goodness or evil is dependent entirely upon what it is dyed with. We must strive to dye ourselves and others with the doctrine of universal love, but the masses of the people are short-sighted. It is difficult to make them see the benefits of universal love. Therefore, Mo-Tze laid stress on religious sanctions. He held that there is a God who rewards people who practise universal love and punishes those who do not. He says:

"The ancient saintly Kings of the Ya, Tang, Wen and Wu dynasties were those who obeyed the Will of Heaven and obtained reward, and the wicked Kings of the Chieh, Chon, Yu and Li dynasties were those who opposed the Will of Heaven and incurred punishment."

The foregoing paragraphs testify the ideals of universal love cherished by Mo-Tze. In short, Mo-Tze loved all people without any distinction. Mencius described him as: "If by quenching his whole body from the crown to the heel he could have benefited the world, he would have done it."

Judging from Mo-Tze's idea of universal love we see it is very similar to that of Ahimsa. Ahimsa is a word negative in form with a positive sense. We Chinese prefer to use the positive term rather than the negative of Indians. The philosophy of Love of Mo-Tze and the Ahimsa of the Hindu philosophy are the twin names of the same gospel.

I have no better words to express my feeling about Mo-Tze's philosophy than in the words of the Mahabharata:

"Ahimsa is the Supreme Religion." And Swami Sivanandaji has said,

"There is only one religion—the religion of love" (*The Voice of the Himalayas*)

**Chapter Eight**

**T A B I S M**

# Taoism

Sri Swami Shivananda

The Founder of Taoism was Lao Tze. Lao Tze was born in 604 B.C. in the village of Chu Jhre, in Li contry, heooging in the Ku province of the State Chu. He was born under the plum tree (in Chinese 'Li'). He adopted it as his surname. The hair of the head was white when he was born. Hence he was called Lao Tze (old boy) or philosopher, or one who is child like even when old.

He was popularly called Lao-Tze. His name was Er (ear). He was Called Tan after his daish. 'Tan' means long lobe. He had peculiar long ears. His appellation was 'Po Yao' or 'count of positive principle.'

He was a keeper or recorder of the secret Archives in the Royal court of Chou. He was a State Historian.

Tao is a Chinese word meaning 'way,' 'way of Heaven,' 'path' or 'road' or 'method.' It indicates a line or principle of conduct. There is no proper English term for Tao. It means the 'Eternal Being.'

## Tao

Lao Tze says: Tao is one. It was in the beginning. It will remain for ever. It is impersonal, eternal, immutable, omnipresent, heedless, immaterial. It cannot be perceived by the senses. It is nameless. It is indescribable.

It is the first cause from which all substances take their origin and all phenomena flow. The great Tao is all pervading. All things depend on it for life. It is the mother of all phenomena of heaven and earth. It existed before the Personal God. It is the father of God. It is the producer of God. It is the originator of heaven and earth. It is the mother of all things.

You will find that there is an aroma of

Indian Vedantic philosophy in the teachings of Lao Tze.

Tao is everywhere. It is in the ant. It is in the grass. It is in the earthenware vessel. It is in extremest. It is in the highest place but is not high. It is in the lowest place, but is not low. It is in ancient times, but itself is not ancient. It is in old age but itself is not old. It is everywhere but everywhere it is nothing.

Tao is the sanctuary where all things find refuge. It is the good man's priceless treasure. It is the guardian and saviour of him who is not good. Tao overpreads and sustains all things.

The Tao which can be expressed in words is not the Eternal Tao. The name which can be uttered is not its Eternal Name.

Whatever is contrary to Tao soon ends. When the great Tao prevails the outer doors need not be closed. All will be virtuous. There will be no theft.

If Tao perishes then virtue will perish. If virtue perishes then charity will perish. If charity perishes then righteousness will perish. If righteousness perishes then ceremonies will perish.

The man who achieves harmony with Tao enters into close union with external objects. No object has the power to harm or hinder him.

Tao does nothing. It has no bodily form. It cannot be seen. It has its root in itself. From Tao came the mysterious existence of God. It produced heaven and earth. It was before the primordial ether. Tao produces all things and nourishes them. It presides over all. Tao is the fundamental principle of the philosophy and religion of Lao Tze.

The way of Tao is to act without thinking of acting to taste without discern-

in any flavour, to consider what is small as great and a few as many and to react injury by kindness.

Purity, humility, contentment, compassion, kindness towards all living creatures, higher knowledge and self-control, are the means for attaining Tao. Concentration and Pranayama (breathing exercises) are helpful in the path of Tao.

### Who is a Sage

A sage or a true man has no plans to attain some ends. He has no occasion for repentance. He has no self-complacency. He can pass through water without being wet by it. He can go into fire without being burnt. By his knowledge he ascended to and reached Tao.

He does not accumulate for himself. He does not show himself. He does not boast of what he will do. He is not proud of his work. He does not contend with others.

He wears coarse garments, but carries a jewel in his heart. He hides his light under a bushel.

He never dreams when he sleeps. He has no anxiety when he wakes up. He does not care at all that his food should be delicious and pleasant. His breathing is deep and silent.

He knows nothing of the love of life or of the hatred of death. He has no fear of death. Love and enmity, profit and loss, honour and disgrace, do not touch him.

### Sayings of Lao-Tze

*Tao Te Ching* (Canons of Tao and Its Manifestation) contains the sayings and teachings of Lao-Tze. Lao-Tze himself wrote this book in the sixth century B.C. This title was given by Emperor Ching. He issued an imperial decree that Lao-Tze's work on Tao should be respected as a canonical book.

He who acts, destroys. He who grasps, loses. Therefore, the sage does not act

and so does not destroy. He does not grasp and so he does not lose.

Without going out of doors, one may know the entire universe; without looking out of the window, one may see the way of heaven. The further one travels, the less one may know. Thus it is that without moving you shall know; without looking you shall see; without doing you shall attain.

Sincere words are not fine; fine words are not sincere.

If you would contract, you must first expand. If you would weaken, you must first strengthen. If you would overthrow, you must first raise up. If you would take, you must first give. This is called the dawn of intelligence.

In the good I would be good. To the not good, I would also be good in order to make them good.

He who humbles himself shall be preserved entire. He who bends shall be made straight. He who is empty shall be filled. He who is worn out shall be renewed. He who has little shall succeed. He who has much shall go astray.

Some things are increased by being demolished and others are diminished by being increased.

Those who know, do not speak; those who speak, do not know.

To know when one does not know is best. To think one knows when one does not know is a dire disease. Only he who recognizes this disease as disease can cure himself of the disease.

I have three precious things which I hold fast and prize. The first is gentleness; the second is frugality; the third is humility, which keeps me from putting myself before others. Be gentle, and you can be bold; be frugal and you can be liberal. Avoid putting yourself before others and you can become a leader among men.

There is no greater sin than yielding to desire; no greater misery than discontentment; no greater calamity than the propensity to acquire.

Abandon your aching. Put away your gains. Thieves and robbers will not exist.

Hold fast to that which will endure.

Show thyself simple, preserve thee pure, thine own keep small, thy desires poor.

Renounce learnedness and you will have no vexation. He who overcomes others is strong, but he who overcomes himself is mighty.

#### Conclusion

Taoism has its monks and nuns. They wear yellow caps. They retire from the world and live in caves, forests and secluded retreats in mountains.

Taoism inculcates the highest ethics, pure living, and discipline of mind and body.

Emancipation is attained through the realization "of Tao through self-conquest.

There is the idea of purgatory in Taoism,

of the reward and punishment after death. There is also rebirth. Lao-Tze believed in the immortality of the Soul. He advocated the doctrine of reincarnation of the soul after death.

Sincerity is the first step towards the knowledge of Tao. That knowledge is maintained by silence. Tao is employed with gentleness.

When the aspirant is serene and tranquil, his wisdom becomes complete. When his wisdom becomes complete, the light of intelligence grows around him. When the light of intelligence grows around him, he is one with the Tao. This is true forgetfulness, a forgetting which does not forget, a forgetting of what cannot be forgotten. That which cannot be forgotten is the True Tao.

Glory to Lao Tze, the founder of Taoism that old boy who was born under the plum tree with peculiar long ear-loops, with white hair, the reputed Sage of China!

Glory, glory to Tao, the Eternal Great One, the Brahman of the Upanishads.

## On Religious Toleration

From One of the Rock Edicts of King Ashoka

"The King Piyadassi honours all sects, monks and householders, he honours them by liberality and various kinds of favours.. But there is a fundamental law for every sect, namely, moderation in speech, that one should not exalt one's own sect in decrying others, and not depreciate them lightly, but that one ought on the contrary, to show always to other sects the honour due to them. In this manner one exalts one's own sect, and benefits others, while in acting otherwise one injures one's own sect, and does not benefit others. He who exalts his own sect and decry others, does it from devotion to his own sect in order to make it illustrious, but really in acting thus he only damages his own sect. Therefore, peace alone is good so that all should hear and listen gladly to the opinions of others."

(Translated by F. Max Muller from "Les Inscriptions de Piyadassi," par E. Senart)

# Wisdom of Taoist Scriptures

Collected By Sri Swami Sivananda

1. Wherover there is attachment, there is bondage. If there is no attachment, there is no bondage. Where there is no bondage, there is happiness. This is the essence of cultivating life.

2. Tao is everywhere. It is in the ant. It is in the grass. It is in the earthenware tile. It is in the excreta.

3. Tao is the sanctuary where all beings find refuge. It is priceless treasure. It is the guardian and avator.

4. Tao overspreads and sustains all things.

5. There are three precious things. The first is gentleness; the second is frugality; and the third is humility. Be gentle, you can be bold. Be frugal, you can be liberal. Be humble, you can be a leader among men.

6. The great way is very smooth; but the people love the by-paths.

7. Accumulate virtue and store up merit. Treat all with gentleness and love. Be loyal. Be dutiful. Be respectful to your elders and kind to your juniors. Do not injure even the little insects, grass or trees.

8. Be upright yourself in order that you may reform others. Show compassion to orphans and widows. Revere the aged.

9. A sage sleeps without dreaming and wakes up without anxiety. He neither loves, nor hates death. Living he experiences no sorrow, dying he offers no resistance.

10. The man who is in harmony with Tao enters into close union with external objects. None of them has the power to harm or hinder him. Passing through solid metal or stone, walking in the midst of fire or on the surface of water—all these things became possible to him.

11. Tao acts without action, does without doing, finds favour to what is

flavorless, can make the small great and the few many.

12. Birth is not a beginning. Death is not an end. There is existence without limitation.

13. There is no guilt greater than inaction or ambition; no calamity greater than to be discontented with one's lot; no fault greater than the wish to be getting. Therefore, the sufficiency of contentment is no endeavor and no boasting sufficiency.

14. Those who do evil in the open light of the day—men will punish them. Those who do evil in secret—God will punish them. Who fears both, men and God, he is fit to walk alone.

15. Promote goodness. Resounce much. Accept little. Do not boast of your own excellence. Do not see to the faults of others.

16. Blessed is the man who speaketh what is good, who thinketh what is good and who practiseth what is good.

17. To a mind that is still, the entire world surrenders.

18. We are born as from a quiet sleep, and we die in a calm awakening.

19. There are no spectral dooms to calamity and happiness, they come as men themselves call them. Their recompenses follow good and evil as the shadow follows the substance.

20. There is a creative principle which is itself uncreated, there is a principle of change which is itself unchanging. The uncreated is able to create life, the unchanging is able to effect change. That which is produced cannot but continue producing, that which is evolved cannot but continue evolving. Hence there is constant production and constant evolution.

21. Nothing is absolutely right, and nothing is absolutely wrong.

# Lao-Tze

Dr C H Yeung

(Penang)

It is but natural to ask the question has the East benefited from the impact of Western culture and civilization with its science and inventions, guns and aeroplanes and with its so called industrial and technological progress? By way of answer it is pertinent to point to the unreal and unsettled conditions in the world today both in the West and in the East. In their sad predicament western thinkers are only just beginning to realize that the road to peace does not depend on preparedness for war but rather lies in a radical change of human nature. This is precisely what the Chinese philosopher of old taught.

If you read Plato you will see how tragically the modern world is repeating the errors that were so common in his days and if you will but turn to China's Lao-Tze you will find that for twenty five centuries man has had before his eyes the solution to the many problems with which he fumbles today.

Western philosophy owes its origin to Greek thinkers (contemporaries of Lao-Tze) who in turn owed something to Egypt and further back still, to the philosophers of ancient India. Modern science is not wisdom encyclopaedic knowledge is not wisdom and it has perhaps rightly been said that there was more genius in Greece at one time than in the whole of Great Britain and America today.

The earliest Mediterranean philosophers concerned themselves largely with speculation as to the nature of the universe in which man found himself and, later man's relation to that universe, whereas in the East, Indian and Chinese philosophy concerned themselves mainly with one ultimate, namely, the essence of human nature,

teaching in effect that any radical change in the world of man must first be preceded by a radical change in human nature. This emphasis is all the more surprising when, as I said before, Western thinkers today are beginning to realize that the problems which civilization has raised for itself demand a fundamental change in human nature for their solution.

China reached a high standard of culture and civilization when Europe was still barbarian and we can say that in the East, in spite of and not because of the countless benefits of western science, luxury, sanitation and rapid communications there is more enduring peace of mind in their native simplicity and humility of life than can be found anywhere in the West where millions and millions of sleeping pills are consumed every year.

It is in the realm of philosophy that China can claim her greatest contribution to the world but unfortunately here is a simple philosophy of reaction so that today we find the Americans and Europeans more interested in the equally great Vedantic philosophy of India than in the teachings of Lao-Tze and Confucius. It must be confessed that notwithstanding the admirable translations and commentaries of such great sinologues as James Legge, Lionel Giles and Arthur Waley (to all of whom we owe so much for their efforts to make China intelligible to the West), most Westerners display a profound ignorance of Chinese philosophy.

I have chosen the title 'Lao Tze' for my article because Lao Tze is the 'Father of Chinese Philosophy,' and although he is less well-known than

Confucius, the influence of his teachings is still dominant to this day

### Taoism

The name of Lao Tze brings at once to mind his mystic teachings contained in that famous little volume of "Tao Te Ching" consisting of 5,000 characters. Let it be clearly understood at the outset that we are not in the least concerned with the degenerated alchemical cult known as Taoism with its temples of magic and sorcery and priesthood presided over by a Taoist pope installed with pomp and ceremony. We confine ourselves to the pure principles contained in those 5,000 characters whereof lies a wealth of suggestive thoughts and pregnant verses each containing a world of thought in itself and capable of expansion into volumes.

### Lao-Tze's Life

Unfortunately, very little is known of the life of Lao-Tze. He founded no school and had no personal disciples and all we know about him is that he was born about 604 BC (50 years before Confucius). It is told that the philosopher had been a curator of the Royal Library at Kau and that, mourning over the decadence of the dynasty, he wished to withdraw from the world and proceeded to the pass of Hsieoku (in the province of Honan) leading from China to the West. There he was recognized by the warden of the pass who insisted on his leaving him a writing before going into seclusion.

Lao Tze then wrote his views on the Tao and its characteristics gave the manuscript to the warden and went his way, never to be seen again. Lao Tze himself admitted that he was merely a transmitter, and it is conceivable that like Confucius he was not the originator and that for thousands of years before he wrote the Tao Te Ching the principles taught there had been evolved and known to the Chinese people.

### Doctrine of Quietism

Lao-Tze, the mystic and metaphysician, spoke chiefly of the abstract and intangible, and his teaching revolved around the indefinable and nameless Tao. On the other hand, Confucius, the great realist and moral philosopher, preferred not "speaking" about things unseen. Confucianism is thus a moral code based on filial piety and buttressed by altruism and righteousness, and it is therefore a mistake to call it a religion by that name.

Taoism is often referred to as "the doctrine of quietism" and this inadequate expression has always been a stumbling block to Western students. It has been rendered by translator after translator as "inaction" "doing nothing" a doctrine that will never appeal to the Western mind. The way of the West is the way of things as they appear to be, it is the way of materialism and technocracy, but the way of the East is the way of the Universal Spirit. Lao-Tze was by no means so idle dreamer sitting down to look out of the window and doing nothing in order that everything might be accomplished. As Confucius was no externalist, a mere master of ceremonial and purveyor of platitudes.

### Studying of Tao

To enter fully into the heart of Lao-Tze and obtain a just idea of his doctrine one should read the original Chinese text, or any good translation philosophy independently leaving out the translator's personal commentaries. One must be on the guard not to mistake the superficial and apparently obvious meaning for the hidden and esoteric interpretation. The Chinese commentators to say the least, disagreed among themselves as to the exact interpretation of Lao Tze.

There are more than 10 translations in German and more than 15 translations in English of the same little volume of 5,000

characters, each trying to be different from the others in interpretation, which serves to prove that few Westerners can ever understand the essence of Lao-Tze's teachings.

To understand Lao-Tze one must not take him too literally, but must bear in mind that underlying every word is the hidden light of Truth. Since truth cannot be conveyed to the human mind by any language, its realization rests solely on personal intuitive perception and not on analysis and logic. Since no two men can even see alike a simple object as a flower and a landscape, each man must of necessity see truth in the light of his own individual capacity.

#### Knowledge

Let us hear from Lao-Tze himself why he wrote in such elasticity of style: "There are many things of which it is best not to speak, for Knowledge in the hands of those who do not know how to use it is a curse. But counselled by those who have greater wisdom than myself, it is right that I should set down certain things which they have told me so that those whom they concern may read them."

"Others also have received that Teaching of the Lords of Wisdom, so there is nothing new in what I shall say, these truths are as old as the Universe, and there shall come a time when all must understand them, even though now they fill men with fear. Yet those who are unable to face Truth had better remain in ignorance, a brilliant light will blind eyes not strong enough to gaze upon it."

The old man again warns his readers: "The teaching has been likened to a finger pointing at the moon of Truth, you are a fool if you take the finger for the moon. Consider it thus - the word 'tea' is not tea itself, and no more is a doctrine the actual Truth. The scriptures do but point the

way, and those who rest content with them may be likened to men who think a finger-point is good as a journey. Therefore, beware of my words! He who puts but one sentence of this book into practice is far greater than he who has read it ten thousand times and remained satisfied with the mere words. What I have written here is not Truth; it is a finger pointing the Way. And now that you have read all, do not stop to gape at what I have written like a child at display of fireworks—pass on!"

#### Practice of Tao

Lao-Tze teaches that when a man of wisdom hears of Tao, he diligently practices it. When the average scholar hears of Tao, he sometimes follows it, and sometimes loses it. When a man of no wisdom is told about Tao, he loudly laughs at it. Were it not thus ridiculed, it would not be worthy of the name of Tao. Those who are wise have no wide range of learning; those who range most widely are not wise.

Lao-Tze teaches that those who are empty-handed shall find the Path of Tao. The lords of Wisdom will accept only those who are the poorest of the poor, who are utterly free from possessions, for the entrance is so small that those who would enter must leave everything behind. For whether a man lives in a palace or a hut he will not be accepted if he is a slave to his possessions. True poverty is poverty in all places; absence of wealth does not always mean poverty, the highest poverty is absence of selfish desires. One may be a pauper and yet be a lord over many lands.

For those who prize possessions Truth is unwelcome; it proclaims the dissolution of all those things they value most—the death of all, the end of personality, and the decay of the body. Yet all this

# Sayings of Chuang-Tze

Translated From Chinese by Herbert A. Giles

[Chuang Tze lived during the third and fourth centuries B.C. He was a mystic materialist and social reformer. He was one of the foremost expounders of the philosophy of Lao Tze. Following are some of his sayings chosen from his works.]

At the beginning of the beginning, even nothing did not exist. Then came the period of the Nameless.

When One came into existence, there was One, but it was formless. When things got that by which they came into existence, it was called their virtue. That which was formless but divided, though without distinctness, was called destiny.

Then came the movement which gave life, and things, produced in accordance with the principles of life, had what is called form. When form encloses the spiritual part, each with its own characteristics, that is its nature. By cultivating this nature, we are carried back to virtue, and if this is perfected we become as all things were in the beginning. We become unconditioned.

Joy and anger, sorrow and happiness, caution and remorse, come upon us by turns, with ever-changing mood. They come like music from hollowness like mushrooms from damp. Daily and nightily they alternate within us, but we cannot tell whence they spring.

But for these emotions I should not be. But for me, they would have no scope. So far we can go, but we do not know what it is that brings them into play.

There is nothing which is not objective; there is nothing which is not subjective. But it is impossible to start from the objective. Only from subjective knowledge is it possible to proceed to objective knowledge.

When subjective and objective are both without their correlates, that is the very axis of Tao, and when that axis passes through the centre at which all infinites converge, positive and negative alike blend into an infinite One.

Only the truly intelligent understand this principle of the identity of all things. They do not view things as apprehended by themselves, subjectively, but they transfer themselves into the position of the things viewed, and viewing them thus they are able to comprehend them, nay, to master them, and he who can master them is near. So it is that to place oneself in subjective relation with externals, without consciousness of their objectivity,—this is Tao.

God is a principle which exists by virtue of its own intrinsicality and operates spontaneously, without self manifestation.

Knowing what God is, man knows that he himself proceeded therefrom. Knowing what man is, he resists the knowledge of the known waiting for the knowledge of the unknown. Working out one's allotted span and not perishing in mid career,—this is the inliness of knowledge.

The natural abides within the artificial without. Virtue abides in the natural. Knowledge of the action of the natural and of the artificial has its root in the natural development in virtue. And thus whether in motion or at rest, whether in expansion or in contraction, there is always a reversion to the essential and to the ultimate.

Chapter Nine

SHINTOISM

is no cause for despair. When the fool is faced by death he is afraid, being attached to the body, and thinketh "I shall die," when the fool falls on evil times he is unhappy and thinketh, "I am miserable." In time of wealth he is intoxicated and crieth, "I am well pleased."

Yet, fear, misery and pleasure result from a desire to possess the body and the personality, only the poor man is happy, because he does not long to possess. And when the lords of wisdom proclaim that all things are subject to change, that the body, the senses and the self are destined to pass away, the poor man is not afraid. The Truth does not blind him or make him grieve, for he knows that "I" is none of these things—is not the body, nor the sensea, nor the self; it is not affected by pleasure or pain—all these exist in "I" and the wise do not identify the part with the Whole.

#### Law of Action and Reaction

Those of us who have studied physics are familiar with Newton's third law of motion, namely, that every action has an equal and opposite reaction. This law is called in India by Hindusages the Law of Karma—the law of cause and effect, and Lao-Tze explains it by saying that it is an old truth that if a man acts, the consequences of his action will return to him as inevitably as the night follows the day, and for many, this is a terrible teaching. Unwilling to face it they call it "platitudes" and pass on their way unheeding. Yet for all that they cannot escape the results of their deeds, and though they may ignore this law they are still slaves to it. There cannot be birth without death, action without reaction, rise without fall.

#### Time and Relativity

Albert Einstein had to undergo a laboriously involved process of intricate mathematics understood only by a few in

order to arrive at his ideas of time and relativity, but Lao-Tze teaches in simple words thus: Life is a path stretching from infinity to infinity, of which there are three divisions: the Past, the Present and the Future, and the name of this Path is Tao. In the Present the whole of the Past is gathered together; it is the effect of which the Past was the cause. In the Present lies the seed of the Future, to which it is continually giving birth. Yet because it is continually becoming the Past nor yet is it parent of the Future because the Future is continually becoming the Present; for the present moment never gives birth to and is never born of anything but itself. For behold—the Past, the Present and the Future are summed up in one moment of Time—eternal now. So is it with you. You are the result of all that has ever been, you are all that is; and one of you will be evolved all that is yet to be.

#### Silence Is Golden

Lao-Tze has a word for those who wish to shine as public orators, those who know do not speak, those who speak do not know. Keep the mouth shut, close the gatesways of sense, and as long as you live you will have no trouble. Open your lips and push your affairs and you will not be safe to the end of your days. Practise inaction, occupy yourself with doing nothing (I am sorry you would be wrong to think this means quietism or laziness.)

#### Book-Learning

Lao-Tze does not seem to agree with the socialistic idea of compulsory free education for all, he says: When the Sage governs, he empties the people's minds and fills their bellies, weakens their inclinations and strengthens their bones. His constant object is to keep the people without knowledge and without desire, or to prevent those who have

knowledge from daring to act He practises inaction, and nothing remains ungoverned

In ancient times those who knew how to practise Tao, did not use it to enlighten the people, but rather to keep them ignorant. The difficulty of governing the people arises from their having too much knowledge. Abandon learning and you will be free from trouble and distress. The pursuit of book-learning brings about daily increase. The practice of Tao brings about daily loss. Repeat this loss again and again, and you arrive at inaction. Practise inaction and there is nothing which cannot be done.

#### What is Tao?

The whole of Lao-Tze's teachings hinges upon a correct conception of the meaning of Tao. What then is this thing called Tao? Unfortunately Lao Tze himself discourages any attempt to define Tao because he says that the Tao which can be expressed in words is not the eternal Tao, the name which can be uttered is not its eternal name. Each translator puts up a different interpretation, e.g., nature, law, reason, absolute, path, way, truth, heaven, etc. Lao Tze refers to Tao as being the source of all things. It is infinite profundity. It seems ever to endure. It looks like the predecessor of nature. It is a stabilizing force, invisible and intangible. It is inherent and natural, motionless and faultless, it stands alone and never changes, pervades everywhere. It is ever inactive, yet there is nothing that it does not do.

#### Way of Life

The British Council propagates the

British way of life, the American Army upholds the American way of life, but Lao-Tze merely indicates the human way of life, irrespective of colour, race and creed. The man of Tao is simple, like an infant. He is humble, and thus he remains entire. He is cautious, modest, yielding. He keeps to the state of perfect peace. He avoids excess, extravagance, and indulgence. Like water he stays in places others despise. He loves the world as he does his own person. He is subtle, penetrating and profound. He knows himself, he conquers himself, he knows others. He is free from desire. He follows the eternal. He is in perfect harmony, he loves quietude and does not talk much. He is not self-interested. He has three treasures: love, moderation, and not venturing to go ahead of the world. He returns love for great hatred. He acts to the good or to the bad with goodness, and to the faithful or the faithless with faith. He knows honour, yet keeps to humility.

There is a great deal more that one could write without end on Lao Tze's teachings, but before closing I think it fitting to conclude with the words of Compton Mackenzie the famous English writer, speaking in a BBC programme, under the title I speak for myself:

The West has always needed the East spiritually. That need has been overshadowed by the temptation to profit materially from the East and both West and East are apt to remember only the material goods which the East has given to the West and forget the spiritual good conferred by the East on the West."

He who raises himself on tiptoe cannot stand firm. He who stretches his legs wide apart cannot walk, he who is self approving does not shine, he who boasts has no merit, he who exalts himself does not rise high — *Tao Te Ching*

# Shintoism

Swami Sivananda

It is very difficult to translate the word 'Shinto' into English. Shinto means the "Way of the gods" or the "God-like way" or the "Way from the gods". There is no proper equivalent for the term 'Shinto' in English. Shinto is an "all-pervading, indefinable Way" which is quite universal.

Shinto or Kaminomichi or the way of the Kami or the gods is the name of the religion observed by the Japanese from time immemorial. Kami means God or deity or sometimes soul. Shinto implies spontaneous following of the 'Way of the gods'. Shinto is not really an 'ism'. It is only a teaching. It is not a set of verbal theories or concepts.

It is the all pervading way.

Shintoism is divided into two classes, viz., the sectarian Shinto, which is subdivided into 13 sects, and the Shinto of the national faith of the Japanese, or the state Shinto religion.

The patriotic spirit of the Japanese is unique. The loyalty of the Japanese to the Mikado or the Sovereign is unprecedented. You are already aware of these traits of the Japanese from the second world war.

A perfect understanding of Shinto will enable one to have proper understanding of the Japanese nation and their culture. There is neither much grand philosophy nor complicated rituals in Shintoism. Shinto is not a religion adopted by the State. It is a religion of the hearts. Shinto is a natural and real spiritual force which pervades the life of the Japanese. Shinto is a creative or formative principle of life. The Shinto principle is the background of Japanese culture, code of ethics, fine arts, family and national structure.

Shinto is the chief agent which has rejuvenated, vitalized and reinforced the

social and religious life of Japan.

The system of Shinto resembles more the system of Hinduism than that of Confucianism or Buddhism. It is a kind of personal religion. It ascribes divine attributes to every being. It is a kind of pantheism.

To the Japanese nation means a harmonious complex of individual Kuni hito. Salvation to the Japanese means the salvation of the whole nation, instead of salvation of a few individuals.

## Shinto Theology

According to Shinto theology 'Ame no-mu-naka-nushi' is the Absolute Universal Self. This corresponds to Hiranyagarbha or the three Soul (Sutratman) of the Hindus. The visible universe (Ken Ksh) and the invisible world (Yu Ksh) have come into being from 'Ame no-mu-naka-nushi' through the activities of the three deities of Musubi, Principle of Creation Completion and the Controlling Bond between the spiritual and the material, the invisible and the visible, the real and the ideal. These contradictory attributes are functional only. The Absolute Universal Self is not affected by these contradictory attributes. It is beyond these attributes. It corresponds to the Nirguna Brahman of Hinduism. The idea of time has come into existence from the attributes.

Absolute loyalty to the Sovereign Emperor, who is regarded as a direct descendant and representative of the highest God, respect for ancestors, profound feeling of piety towards the parents and love for children, form the fundamental structure of the Great Universal Way.

The mirror, the sword and the jewel have a figurative meaning in the course of the development of Shinto. They symbo-

like wisdom, courage and benevolence, or intelligence, will and love is Shinto theology. These three are the holy symbols of royalty of the Sovereign Emperor. They are supposed to symbolize the dyadic working of the Great Way and so they are found in the forefront of every Shinto shrine, popularly known as Misato-fomo-s or the three big crosses.

There are many gods in Shinto, but the ancestral Sun God, Anataresu-omi Kemi, stands supreme above them.

Susaco-o-on Mikoto is the tempestuous divine Brother of the Sun God. He is the God of rain storm. Tsukiyomi-o-Mikoto is the Moon God. These three constitute a divine triad. They preside respectively over the place of High Heaven, the vast ocean and the realm of Night.

#### Shinto Ethics

Purity is one of the fundamental virtues of Shinto ethics. There are two significations of purity. One is outer purity or bodily purity and the other inner purity or purity of heart. If a man is endowed with true inner purity of heart he will surely attain God-realization or communion with the Divine. Sincerity is also the guiding ethical principle of Shinto.

- (i) Do not transgress the will of the gods.
- (ii) Do not forget your obligations to ancestors.
- (iii) Do not violate the decrees of the State.
- (iv) Do not forget the profound goodness of the gods through which calamity and misfortunes are averted and sickness is healed.
- (v) Do not forget that the world is one great family.
- (vi) Do not forget the limitations of your own person.
- (vii) Do not become angry even though others become angry.

- (viii) Do not be sluggish in your work.
- (ix) Do not bring shame to the teaching.
- (x) Do not be carried away by foreign teachings.

#### Shinto Sayings

The heart of the person before you is a mirror. See there your own form.

Even the wishes of an ant reach heaven.

Leave the things of this world and come to Me daily with pure bodies and pure hearts.

A single sincere prayer moves heaven. You will surely realize the divine presence through sincere prayer.

Where you have sincerity, there also is virtue. Sincerity is a witness to truth. Sincerity is the mother of knowledge. Sincerity is a single virtue that binds Divinity and man to one.

Rabbits too for good or evil is as sure as the shadow after substance.

To do good is to be pure. To commit evil is to be impure.

To admit a fault is the beginning of righteousness.

The first and surest means to enter into communion with the Divine is sincerity. If you pray to a deity with sincerity you will surely feel the divine presence.

Our eyes may see some uncleanness, but let not our mind see things that are not clean. Our ears may hear some uncleanness, but let not our mind hear things that are not clean.

#### Conclusion

Shinto is the "Way to God". Tao of Lao-Tze is also the 'Way to God'. Lord Jesus says "I am the Truth, the Way and the Life". Sri Krishna says "Howssoever men approach Me, even so, do I welcome them, for the path men take from every side is Mine."

The way to God is as much important as the end or destination or God Himself.

The Way to God is righteousness or Dharma He who shows the Way is Guru or the spiritual preceptor Guru and God are one If you stick to the Way you will soon reach God If you stick to Guru you will surely attain God realization The Way Truth and Life everlasting are one

Glory to the Way Shinto or Tao ! Glory to Guru ! Glory glory to God the Destination or Goal of all religions May Shinto or Tao guide you rejuvenate, vitalize and reinforce you all ! Be true to Shinto or Tao

## Shinto Aphorisms

Collected by Dr Selwyn G Champion

Conquest of self is the root of benevolence

Thine own heart makes the world  
Honesty is the true heart of the gods

Hold on to virtue it is dearer than life  
Virtue goes hand in hand with happiness

To see justice and fail to do it is an act of cowardice

Prayer is the foremost means for appealing for the Divine Grace

Clothe yourself with kindness Requite evil with kindness

Uprightness is a fundamental quality if one would obtain the unseen protection

Loyalty is a source not only of moral but religious insight

One good deed is better than three days of fasting in a temple

Sincere action by noble minded men reflects the very Self of the Unsao

Esteem loyalty, and righteousness are higher than life

Ahlation means following the right and moral way

Even in a single leaf or in a tender blade of grass the awe inspiring Deity manifests itself

Pollution means moral evil or vice  
The entire earth proclaims the presence of the Deity

Evil deeds return to the doer

The Deity is absolute It transcends human words which are of a relative nature It is incomprehensible and yet it permeates all things

Forbearance is more precious than all treasures It is the basis of contentment

The welfare of the nation is greater than that of oneself One should be prepared to sacrifice one's life for the sake of the nation

Both heaven and hell are in one's heart

Forgive others but yourself never  
Practise the art of giving up  
The gods are after all like the waves of the sea

If the heart is upright deeds will be good

There is no shady secrecy for the holy man

God accompanies a child

Even the shaking of a aleeva is affected by one's other tife

A candle by consuming itself gives light to others

Misfortune also becomes a bridge to happiness

No Dality goes a crooked way

To single heartedness all things are possible

A metal tipped staff in hand doubly strengthens the devil

Good doctrine needs no miracle

That which one has done that shall one suffer

Evil is lined with good

The path of fate is straight and turns not

Our life is but a candle flame in the wind.

Our life is a moment of a dream.

If you desire to obtain help, give up pride.

What pleases God is virtue and sinlessness, and not any number of mortal

offerings

So long as man's mind is in accord with the way of truthfulness, the gods will guard him, though he may not pray.

Peace in the land, safety to the people, and abundant harvest in the resports—this is the Shinto prayer.

## A Symposium of Prayers

### Invocation

Teach us, O Lord, to see Thy life in all men and in all the peoples of Thine earth.

### Buddhist

All praise be to the Lord, the Holy One, Perfect in Wisdom I go to The Enlightened One for refuge, I go in the Law for refuge, I go in the Brotherhood for refuge.

### Christian

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

### Confucian

Oh, reverent Oh, reverent God is glorious Help me to bear this burden on my shoulders and show me the glorious virtue and conduct.

### Hindu

Let us meditate upon the adorable light of the Divine Creator May He direct our minds.

### Jain

Adoration to the Lord, the Destroyer of foes, the Supreme God, the King of those who have attained Victory

### Jewish

Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One. And thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

### Muhammadan

There is no Dally but God All praise be to God, the Lord of all the worlds, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Master of the Day of Judgment.

### Shinto

All ye men who dwell under heaven! Regard all beings as your brothers and sisters. You will then enjoy this divine country, free from hate and sorrow.

### Sikh

The one Supreme Being, whose name is Eternal Truth, the Creator, the Spirit, devoid of fear and enmity, Immortal, Uniform, Self-existent, the Enlightener, the Bestower of Grace. Glory be to Him

### Tao

To know the Eternal is enlightenment  
The Divine Way is the asylum of all things,  
the good man's treasure, the bad man's last resort.

### Zoroastrian

Blessed was the Thought, and blessed was the Word, and blessed was the Deed of the Holy One Purity is the heat gift. Happiness is to him who is pure for the sake of purity

### Benediction

From unrighteous lead us to Truth From darkness lead us to Light From death lead us to Immortality \*

**Chapter Ten**

**ZOROASTRIANISM**

# Zoroastrianism

Sri Swami Sivananda

Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism and Islam are world-religions but Zoroastrianism is just a national religion now, though it was a world religion in days of yore. It is the religion of the Parsees. The correct name of the religion established by Zoroaster is Mazdayasnlsm which means the worship of Mazda or the Lord.

Mazdayasnlsm was first revealed by Homa to King Jamshid. Afterwards it was revealed to King Fledoon. Then it was revealed to Thrltha. Lastly it was revealed to Zoroaster.

After the death of Zoroaster his son-in-law Jemaape became his successor. Jemaape wrote down the teachings of Zoroaster which are known as Zend Avesta the scripture of the Zoroastrians. Frashoshtira, the father-in law of Zoroaster was the first apostle of this faith. He expounded the tenets of this religion. Zoroastrianism subsequently became the state religion of Persia.

After the time of Zoroaster, Zoroastrianism underwent many changes at the hands of the priests who were called Magi. The priests re-introduced ritualism and the worship of the old nature deities in a new garb by making them archangels of Ahura Mazda.

Persia is now a Mohammedan country. A few Zoroastrians are found there. They were persecuted and driven out of Persia. They took refuge in India. The Parsees have become a self contained community in India. Today the Parsee population in India is about one hundred thousand. They dislike conversion.

Zoroaster was not a philosopher or a metaphysician. He was only a Prophet who had the divine revelation.

Zoroastrianism is not a system of philosophy. It is a revealed religion of faith.

and devotion. During the days of Zoroaster there was an urgent need for ethics and virtuous life. The need for philosophy did not arise. At all times the need to lead a virtuous divine life is far more imperative for the vast majority than the need to understand the various philosophical problems. If one leads the divine life according to the instructions of the sages and and scriptures he will find a solution for all the philosophical problems from within through the voice of the Indweller.

Originally there was a common religion among the Aryans in Central Asia. There is similarity between the Vedic and Zend languages. Even the verification of the Zend Avesta is closely related to that of the Vedas. There is identity of divine names in the Zend Avesta and the Vedas. The Zend language is derived from pre-Vedic Sanskrit. In Sanskrit, Veda means knowledge. In Avesta Avesta means knowledge. Soma in Sanskrit, means an intoxicating juice and in Avesta Homa means an intoxicating drink. In Sanskrit Yagna means sacrifice, in Avesta Yasna means worship, or prayer. In Sanskrit Gita means song. In Avesta Gatha means song. In Sanskrit Atharvan means fire priest and in Avesta Atharvan also means fire priest.

The Zoroastrian Mithra is same as Mitra the sun god of the Vedas. The Vedic rain-god Indra has become the demon Andre. The Yama of the Vedas is the same as Yima of the Avesta. The Saurava of Avesta is the same as Sarva or Siva of the Vedas. Asura in Vedic theology is identical with the word Ahura of the Avesta. In the earlier portions of Rig-Veda Asura is used in the same good sense as Ahura. In Avesta the word Devas is used for demons.

The principal truths taught by Zoroaster are identical with those found in the Vedas. Zoroastrianism has many similarities with the Vedic religion. The doctrines and ceremonials of the Zoroastrians have a most remarkable similarity to those of the Vedas.

#### Zoroastrian Scriptures

The Yasna and the Visparad are the Vedas of Zoroastrianism. The first part of Yasna consists of Gathas or hymns which came from the mouth of the prophet. The Gathas are five in number. The Gathas are written in metres which correspond to the metres of the Sama Veds. The second part of Yasna contains prayers addressed to the Supreme Lord and other deities who form the spiritual hierarchy.

Visparad is a collection of invocations or litanies which are recited before other prayers and scriptures. The twenty-one Nasks deal with all kinds of sciences, viz., medicine, astronomy, agriculture, botany, etc. They correspond to the Vedangas of Hinduism. Then there is the Khordah Avesta or Little Avesta which contains Yeshts (invocations) and prayers for the use of lay persons. The modern Parsees recite these prayers.

Zend Avesta is divided into three parts. The first is Vendidad. This contains religious laws and ancient mythic tales. The second is Visparad. The third is Yasna. The Avesta contains direct conversations between Zoroaster and Ahura Mazda, the Supreme Lord.

#### Fire, the Symbol of God

People believe that the religion of Zoroaster is merely fire-worship. This is a mistake. "Do not say that the Iranians were fire-worshippers. They were worshippers of one God." These are the utterances of the great Firdust. Fire is a sacred and supreme symbol of God. It is a sacred symbol in the Avesta. Fire is considered as the Son of Ahura Mazda.

The prophet of Iran did not merely teach fire-worship. He taught the worship of the one Supreme Lord of the universe, Ahura Mazda. Fire is the symbol of Divine in all sacrifices. It is a sacred object. It is the symbol of divine life. It is the sacred object most reverenced by the Zoroastrians of today.

In every religion the fire has been the symbol of the Supreme Lord. Brahman is fire in Hinduism. Ahura Mazda is fire. The Jews worship their God as a pillar of fire. The Christians declare that their God is a consuming fire. Fire symbolizes the brilliance of the Lord. It is purifying. Fire stands for intelligence, illumination. The worship of Agni or Fire comes in the Vedas also. In the Bible it is said, "God is Light." Upanishads declare "Brahman is Jyotirmaya (full of Light)." In every religion fire finds a place in rituals. Fire brings the message that God is Light of Lights. Zoroaster himself held fire in great sanctity as a noble gift from God. It is said that he ammoned fire from the sky and pointed it to heaven. The heavens burst into fire. Some of the flames darted downwards and lit the altar at his side. Sacred fire in the altar of a temple is a symbol that reminds the Parsee of the glory of Ahura Mazda. It is called Atar in the Avesta.

Every Zoroastrian bows before the sacred fire. At an aat, a fragrant fire, which is the supreme emblem of the purifying and protecting power of the Lord, is carried through every room in the homes of Parsees. The principal place of their worship is the great Fire-Temple in Bombay. For a Parsee it is a sin to burn anything which would pollute fire. The most sacred fire for the Zoroastrians is the Iranshah in Udwads about a hundred miles north of Bombay. It was consecrated one thousand and two hundred years ago. It is said to be the oldest continually preserved fire in the whole world today.

In Iran there were ten principal places of fire-worship before the time of Zoroaster. There were also three kinds of fires for the three classes of people, viz., the noble class or the priests, the warrior class, and the labouring class. There are three types of fire temples, viz., Atash Behran, Adaran and Atash Dadgah. The first is the highest. There are eight temples of this kind in India today.

Ordinary fire is taken from the houses of the king, the commander in chief, the chief priest and is purified nine times and then mixed together. Complex ceremonies are performed by the priests. This fire is regarded very sacred. The Parsees go to the fire temple with a piece of sandal-wood as their offering. The fire reminds them of the Zoroastrian tradition of purity and virtuous life.

The Jews may have received the ideas of heaven and hell of angels and archangels of Messiah, of the resurrection and the last day of judgment from Zoroastrianism. These have laid the foundation to the doctrines of Christianity and Islam also.

Fire is declared to be the most helpful of all the spiritual intelligences or archangels. He is the most friendly one. He comes down from Ahura Mazda. He is acquainted with all heavenly secrets.

#### Ahura Mazda

Ahura Mazda is the Supreme Universal Lord. He is all pervading. He is the source and the locator of life. He corresponds to the Hiranyagarbha of the Hindus. He is the brilliant, majestic, greatest, best, most beautiful, the strongest, most intellectual, the highest in holiness, the holiest among the heavenly, the Lord who created the world. He is changeless, mighty, just, merciful, most benevolent.

He proclaims His own qualities just as Lord Krishna does in the tenth chapter of

the Gita. He says "I am the protector, I am the creator, I am the nourisher, I am the holiest, I am the knower, I am the wise one, I am ever pure, I am the greatest, I am the watcher."

The prophet of Iran preached that all that was good and beneficial to mankind was the creation of Ahura Mazda and everything that was malignant was the creation of Ahriman or Satan. There are two creators, one of good things and the other of evil things. The following is the view of some Parsee scholars. Ahura Mazda is one but He has two aspects represented by Spenta Mainyush and Angra Mainyush. Ahura Mazda is identified with Spenta Mainyush as the spirit of goodness. Angra Mainyush is the spirit of evil.

The following are the commands which Ahura Mazda the Supreme Lord has sent to the followers of Zoroastrianism through His prophet Zoroaster. To know God as one to know the Prophet Zoroaster as His true prophet to have perfect faith in the religion and the Zed Avesta to have unswerving faith in the goodness of God, not to disobey any of the commands of the Zoroastrianism to shun all evil actions, to do virtuous actions to pray five times a day to face some bright object like sun while worshipping God to have perfect faith in the justice on the fourth morning after death, to exert for attaining heaven and to fear hell and to think always that God has done what He willed and shall do what He wills.

#### Ameshaspentas

They are the archangels. They are the possessors of good, the givers of good. The seven Ameshaspentas are Vohuman (the good mind), Ashavahishta (the best holiness), Kshatravay (power), Spandarmad (love), Haumavat (health), Ameretat (immortality) and Fire, the most helpful of the Ameshaspentas. Prayers are continuously

addressed by the Zoroastrians to these archangels. Hymns are continually chanted to them.

### Teachings

Zoroastrianism teaches that Ahura Mazda created man and gave him His body and mind. Ahura Mazda is the protector and nourisher of all. Man is responsible for his thoughts, speeches and actions. Individual will and intellect are connected with the cosmic will and intellect.

Ahura Mazda created this world in six periods. Mashya and Meshyaca are the first man and woman created by God. During the deluge an underground palace "Vere of Yima" was built for the protection of all creatures.

Zoroastrianism is a religion of absolute faith and unswerving devotion to Ahura Mazda. A devotee bows, prays and sacrifices. He makes offerings unto the Lord. He prays and Ahura Mazda grants all his wishes. He prays to remove his sins by separation.

Zoroastrianism teaches that the goal of life is to attain perfect, eternal happiness through companionship with Ahura Mazda. The means for attaining the everlasting bliss is Asha or holiness. Holiness or purity is the soul of Zoroastrianism.

Hoomta, Hoochita, Huvarashis, or Mene-sai, Gavaani, Knoosai, i.e., pure thoughts, pure words, pure deeds—this is the famous axiom of Zoroastrian religion. This is the constantly reiterated rule of the Zoroastrian life. Pure thoughts, pure words, pure actions can be practised only through faith in the Ahura Mazda, the Lord of righteousness. The word Asha includes all the principles of morality. The word Asha comes in almost every chapter of the Zend Avesta. Zoroastrianism teaches that holiness is happiness, and that is the most precious gift of Ahura Mazda and that it is

the best offering to be presented to the Lord by the virtuous.

A Zoroastrian must act in harmony with the will of God. He should study the scriptures and perform his duty to God and his fellowmen. He should strictly observe the divine laws. Then only will he attain holiness and happiness.

Worship of Ahura Mazda, the righteous God and the leading of a virtuous life are the essence of the teachings of Zoroaster. A follower of Zoroastrianism should live in peace and harmony with the fellowmen and should have a good heart. The whole ethical code of the prophet of Iran can be summarized in the purity of thought, word and deed.

### Ethics of Zoroaster

Charity is made an essential part of religion. Great prominence is given to the service of the poor. Charity is one of the cardinal virtues of Zoroastrianism. Sins can be expiated or atoned by charitable acts. Helping those to marry who cannot afford to do so, helping to educate the children of the poor, are regarded as noble forms of charity. In charity and philanthropy the Persians are unequalled.

Truthfulness, hospitality, honesty, kindness to animals, chastity, obedience to parents are virtues to be practised. Special stress is laid on this. The priestly class should shun hypocrisy, greed, negligence, slothfulness, and unkindness to religion. The warrior should avoid oppression, violence, breach of promise, arrogance, vanity, insolence, and encouragement of evil. The agriculturist should shun jealousy, malice, rudeness, and slander.

In the Zoroastrian scriptures there is an emphasis on truth and a hatred of lies. Every Iranian was taught three things: to ride a horse, to wield bow and arrow, and to speak the truth.

There is no polygamy in Zoroastrianism. Marriage is an inviolable contract.

A perfect practical purity is the key-note of Zoroastrian ethics or morality—purity in every action of the personal life, purity in every relation to external nature. A Zoroastrian honours the external elements, viz., earth, water, fire, etc., as the manifestation of the divine purity. He guards their inimitable cleanliness as a tribute to Ahura Mazda, the Supreme Lord, the Universal Life whencefrom everything proceeds. The Hindus also revere and adore the five elements and regard them as divine manifestations. The Vedic hymns or the Samritis portions of the Vedas sing the glory of these elements and the gods who preside over them.

These are the ethical teachings of Zoroaster:—To do good actions, to be pure in thought, word and deed, to have a clean heart, to wish others' good to speak the truth, to do charity, to be kind, to be honest, to attain knowledge, to control anger, to be pious, to respect parents, the teachers and the old and the young, to utter sweet and pleasant words, to be patient, to be friendly towards all, to be contented, to feel ashamed for doing forbidden actions.

#### Navajyoti Ceremony

Between the ages of seven and fifteen, the Navajyoti ceremony is performed. Kusti or the sacred thread and the Sudre or white linen shirt, which are both emblems of purity are put on the boy or girl. This corresponds to the Upanayaseem ceremony of the Hindus. Navajyoti means new birth. This ceremony is the initiation of a boy or girl into Zoroastrianism. The Kusti or the sacred thread is worn round the waist and goes round it three times signifying pure thoughts, pure words and pure deeds incumbent on the wearer. The Kusti is made of seventy-two threads of lamb's wool. The seventy-two threads

represent the seventy-two chapters of the Yassas. He who wears the Kusti must be prepared to fight against evil. This is the meaning in wearing the Kusti. The Kusti is knotted twice in front and twice behind. The four knots signify: (1) Ahura Mazda exists and is holy, (2) Zoroaster's religion is the word of God, (3) Zoroaster is the prophet of God, and (4) the follower of Zoroastrianism should observe purity in thought, word and deed.

#### Prayer

Of all the Avestan prayers, Ashen Vohu and Yetha Ahu Vaityo are most important. They are very often recited. Ashen Vohu: "Purity or holiness is good. Purity is the best of all good. Purity is happiness. Happiness is for him who observes purity for the sake of attaining the highest Purity."

Yetha Ahu Vaityo: "The Will of the Lord is the law of Holiness. The riches of Vohu Mano (good thoughts) will be given to him who works in this world for Mazda and wields in accordance with the will of Ahura the power He gave him to relieve the poor."

The Parsees of Bombay stand on the sea shore repeat their prayer and bend their knees in reverence before the setting sun. Mithre (sun) is regarded as the representative of the Lord. A Zoroastrian sits in front of a brilliant object or a beautiful flower when he offers his prayers.

#### Tower of Silence

The Zoroastrian must keep the earth pure. He must till it as religious duty. Agriculture is a service to the gods. He must guard the earth from all pollution. The air and water must be kept pure. The Zoroastrians are forbidden to pollute the earth, water and fire by burying or burning the dead bodies or by throwing them into the water. The corpse is an impure thing. Therefore the dead body

is carried to the Dokhane or Tower of silence which is generally constructed on the top of a hill and exposed there. The vultures devour the body and no pure element is tainted. Zoroastrianism teaches that it is a sin to burn or bury the dead, that the earth on which the dead body lies becomes unfit for agriculture, that the ground becomes impure.

#### Soul After Death

After death the soul goes to the intermediate world (Hamistaken) which corresponds to Purgatory of the Christianity. The soul of the righteous meets a beautiful maiden, the embodiment of his pure thoughts, pure words and pure actions. He crosses the bridge of the Judge (Chinvat Bridge) which is the seat of judgment safely and reaches heaven. The bridge offers an easy passage for the righteous. The soul passes to the golden seat of Ahura Mazda, the golden seat of Amesha Spenta, the abode of Ahura Mazda.

The soul of the wicked meets a hideous hag—the embodiment of his evil thoughts, evil words and evil actions. He fails to cross the bridge and falls into the fire of Hell. The bridge narrows to the edge of a sword for the wicked.

The soul of the dead hovers round the last resting place in the house, for three days. It takes its seat near the head and chants the Ushavaiti Gatha—"Happy is he to whom Ahura Mazda shall give salvation." Various ceremonies are performed for four days on the spot. The soul has to appear at the Chinvat Bridge on the morning of the fourth day. In the case of the righteous there is a fragrant wind as it appro-

aches the place and there appears a beautiful young maiden. The soul is quite astonished. It asks "O beautiful maiden who art thou?" She replies "I am the conscience of your own self. I am embodiment of your own pure thoughts, pure words and pure actions."

In the case of the unrighteous soul there is a foul smelling wind when it approaches the bridge and there appears an ugly old hag. The soul asks "Who art thou, O old lady?" She replies "I am the conscience of your own self. I am embodiment of your own evil thoughts, evil words and evil actions."

#### General

Just as the Jews place their hope in Messiah, the Hindus in the coming Kalki Avatar, so also the Parsees have been looking forward to the birth of Saoshyant who will establish on earth righteousness and happiness.

The seven principles of the human constitution are physical body, vital power or Prae, Daeva (ego), strength or Kama, consciousness or mind, Urvan (soul) and Fravashri (Atma).

There is no Tapas or austerity in Zoroastrianism in order that the body may not be weakened and rendered unfit for work.

Resuscitation is not found in the scriptures as accepted by orthodox Parsees, but it is taught in the fragments preserved by the Greeks and in the Dastur.

Parsees perform prayers for the dead at stated fixed periods. They perform encantment-worship and do anniversaries for the dead in a elaborate manner.

When happiness or sorrow becomes chronic, then it becomes dangerous. Permanent sorrow is produced by the exaggerated pictures of our imagination; the longer we allow ourselves to dwell in that state, the further we drift from reality. Permanent happiness tends to make men people selfish, oblivious of reality, and uninterested in anything outside their own happiness.

—Rom Landau

# Zoroastrian Sayings

Collected by Sri Swami Sivananda

1. Changeless art Thou, Ahura Mazda, the same now and for ever! Transcendent Being art Thou, unmoved amidst moving things, unaffected in the midst of manifold changes.

2. Supreme is the Lord, the never-changing, immutable, while everything everywhere waxes to wane, grows to decay, takes birth but to die.

3. Thou art Light, Akara Mezda! Where Thou art there is Light. Void of Thee is darkness. Unseen by all Thou seest all. Nothing is hid from Thee!

4. The Great One is not merely a remote spectator of the world. He has created. He is immanent and men can enter into close relation with Him.

5. He is all-pervading. There is no conceivable place where He is not. Closer than the eyes, ears, nose and mouth are to the face, closer than this, is He.

6. He is but the one same God, but men give Him many names.

7. Do not become presumptuous through great connections, family and race. For in the end you can depend on your own deeds alone.

8. The Unseen, deceiving Astivihed (Death) comes to everyone. He accepts neither compliment nor bribe. He respects no persons and strikes down ruthlessly all men.

9. Form no covetous desire, for the demon of greediness will grip thee and blind thee to the beauty and purity of the world and make the Spirit unperceived.

10. The flesh in its numberless forms and colours divides and keeps apart and scatters man from man. But the spirit is one and the same in all.

11. Be diligent and moderate and eat of thine own regular industry. Offer a

share of thine things to the needy and the good.

12. The first perfection is good thoughts, the second good words, the third good deeds. To live in falsehood is worse than death.

13. The three greatest concerns of men are to love an enemy and make him a friend, to make him who is unrighteous righteous and to make the ignorant learned.

14. Hold your heart, your mind, your hands and your feet ever in readiness to the well-doing of the lawful deeds.

15. Let all men practise these five-fold good works: Practise liberality, truthfulness, thankfulness, contentment, wanting to produce the welfare of others and becoming the friend of all.

16. That nature alone is good which will never do unto another whatever is not good unto its own self. Do not do unto others that which is not good to yourself.

17. Poverty while living in honesty is better than opulence which is acquired from others.

18. The greatest thing, the greatest good for man on this life, is Purity. He attains the celestial shade who has procured this Purity by cleansing through good thoughts, words and deeds.

19. Righteousness is the best acquisition of man, the world's highest riches. All the world is but dust but righteousness ends not, for it is deathless.

20. The essence of Religion is Truth, the essence of Law is Virtue.

21. Be not enamoured of respect and reverence, shun them. They hinder spiritual life.

22. Health is real wealth. Wisdom is the real gold and diamond. Contentment constitutes real richness. Faith, virtue,

pley and honesty are the greatest treasures of man.

23 To commit no sin is better than repentance, retribution and renunciation of sin.

24. He has gained nothing who has not gained the soul. Wisdom which is not accompanied by goodness is no wisdom.

25. Do not be too much busying thyself with the affairs of the world, for over-concern about the world becomes destructive to the spirit.

26. Time is Life, and time ill-spent is life wasted away. It is more precious than the most valuable thing in the world. Time can neither be bought nor borrowed. Trifle not away Time. Make the utmost use of it.

27. Truth knows no racial or geographical boundary. Truth is the same for all. Truth always triumphs and conquers falsehood. Truth blinds falsehood even as the dazzling sun blinds theawi.

## "Dualism" in the Teaching of Zarathushtra

Sri Inach J.S. Taraporewala

[Bombay]

Zarathushtra was one of the earliest prophets who emphatically stressed the worship of the One Supreme Being, and yet it is strange that almost all Western scholars have called his teaching a kind of "dualism." In fact, when I was a student at college, I had read in one of our text-books that Zoroastrianism spoke of two equal powers, God and Devil, and so it was a sort of "devil worship!"

The *Gathas* of Zarathushtra do speak of two primeval "creations" of the Creator. The word used in the original teaching is *mainyu*, and this word has been rendered into English by all scholars (including myself) by the word "Spirit." Translators in neither European languages also use the corresponding terms. In English the word "Spirit" has a special connotation owing to the threefold Biblical division of a human being into Body, Soul and Spirit. In Pahlavi the original Avesta word has been merely transcribed as *mainok*, and thence it has passed into our modern Parsi-Gujaratis as *mino*, where it implies "belonging to the other world" as distinguished from the corporal.

In all Gujarati translations of the *Gathas*,

the word *mino* has been invariably used for translating the word *mainyu* from the Avesta, and I would now propose that while translating into English also, the original Avesta word *mainyu* might be retained but an explanation of the word should be given.

Some months ago an esteemed friend drew my attention to my translation of the Avesta *mainyu* by the English word "Spirit." He suggested that the English word was liable to be misunderstood. Thinking over this carefully, I came to the conclusion later on, that my friend was justified in his criticism. So I have come to the decision that it is best to retain the original word *mainyu* in our translations.

### Significance of "Mainyu"

In the *Gathas* the teaching of the *mainyu* (demi) is found in *Yasna 30*. In the first verse, the Prophet declares that he will now explain about the two *mainyu* created by Meher, and in verse 3 he says: "Now to the beginning there were two *mainyu* who had revealed themselves as twins, well working to their thoughts, in their words and in their deeds; these two show themselves as Good and Evil; and of these

two the wise do rightly choose, but not so the unwise."

The word *mānyu* can be derived from man, so thick. Thus the original connotation of the word is "the state of the mind" in a human being. We all know that human beings are the crowning creation of God and as such they have been endowed with the priceless gift of "mind," which no creature of the lower kingdoms possesses. In the *Gathas* the cognate word *manah* (*mano*)—the same as in Sanskrit *manas*—means "mind" and as a matter of fact the two words *mānyu* and *manah* have been often used interchangably. These two words occur in the *Gathas* well over two hundred times, and it is not necessary to discuss all these passages here. Still we may discuss the fundamental verses in which these words, especially the word *mānyu*, are found.

In the very beginning of the teaching we are told (Yas 30,3) that the two reveal themselves as the good (literally, "the better") and the bad. If the word *mānyu* (dual) were translated in this passage as "two Spirits" the implication would be that they are something above and beyond the human being. This would make the human being a sort of plaything of the two God-created "Spirits" outside Himself. Whereas if we take the word *mānyu* in its original (root) sense of 'state of mind' the whole teaching is made quite clear. Mind is the crowning gift of God to the human being and the human being is the fast creature of God as mentioned both in the Bible and in the Pahlavi Book of Creation (Bundahishn 1,28).

#### The Two Paths

The mind alone leads a human being to happiness or to pain and it is the mind alone that can make a heaven or a hell for man. It has been well remarked in Sanskrit, *manas eva manushyanam kaaranam bandha-*

*molashayoh*. This lies at the very basis of Zarathushtria's teaching of the two *mānyu*. After resorting in the *Crozier, Mazda*, created the two *mānyu*, the Prophet goes on to say:

"Listen with your ears to the highest Truths,

Consider them with your mind illumined  
Before deciding between the two Paths.

Man by man, each for his own self"

There are the two *mānyu*, and man has got complete freedom to choose his path in life. He is free to establish either of the two *mānyu* within his being. He is free to choose worldly pursuits, which at best may bring him fleeting happiness, or he may choose the spiritual life, which would bring him happiness for all time, and just because man has full freedom to choose, he is also wholly and completely responsible for all the consequences that flow from his choice. These would be pain or bliss, what we ordinarily term "hell" or "heaven."

The average person in the world prefers the state of mind which pursues the joys of our earth. This is the old *mānyu*, the evil or the worldly state of mind. As a consequence, though he may attain success for a time, still in the long run there is pain and frustration for him. After these painful experiences he slowly begins to realize that worldly pursuits do not give him true happiness. So his mind now turns towards God, and he tries to understand and to acquire the *spenta mānyu*, the holy (spiritual) state of mind.

The "evil" is called *ala mānyu* in the *Gathas* and in the Later Avesta Texts, *angra mānyu*. This latter form becomes later *ahriman*, which is more familiar to students. The *ala* (worldly) state of mind is just "evil"—there are no degrees described in the *Gathas*. The chooser of

aka mainyu chooses the preyas, and is sharply distinguished from him who chooses the streyas. On the spiritual path, however, degrees of growth are indicated. Thus in Yas. 45.2, the "holy" (spavista) mainyu addresses the ongrathus: "Between us neither thoughts nor teachings nor wills, nor yet beliefs, nor words, nor yet deeds, neither I nor Selves, nor our Souls conform." These differences, so strangely contrasted, can best be understood if explained with reference to the human being and his mental state.

#### Reality Behind Duality

At the very beginning of the teaching we are told that both the mainyu have been "created by Mazda" (Mazdaths). [Yas 30.1]

"And who together did these Mainyu  
Twain

Furegather at Creatio's early dawn,  
Life did One make, the Other made

Not-Life.

And thus Creatio's purpose is  
achieved:

Dark is the mind of those that cling  
to False,

But brightly shines the mind that  
holds to Truth." [Yas. 30.4]

This verse in clear words gives us the real sense of mainyu—the state of mind, which leads man to choose either the False or the True and thus makes the Life or Not-Life.

It has been pointed out by Bartholomaeus that in the very name of the Supreme Being of the Gathas (Ahura Mazda) dualism is inherent. The name itself is double; Ahura (Skt. asura) signifies the Lord of Life, and Maz-da means the Creator of the Material Universe (Skt. mahat-dha). Thus the One Supreme Being is the Lord both of Life and of Matter. Thus the essential and fundamental dualism in the Universe is embodied in the very name of the One Supreme, and the two mainyu

were created by Mazda who made the Form-side and endowed His Creation with Mind.

When the human being turns towards his Creator, he is associated with spenta mainyu, and when he progresses upwards and realizes the Supreme he achieves spenishita mainyu (the superlative degree). In that state of mind the human being becomes eternally with his God and is in tune with the Infinite. In the Later Avesta Texts Ahura-Mazda Himself has been addressed as spenishita mainyu, which has led to considerable confusion in Later Avesta theology. Still one can see the reason why the Supreme was called by this name. In the highest mental state the human being realizes the spenishita mainyu (or his God) within himself.

Mind is the source of all human pain and bliss. In the teaching of the Gathas we are told of the amsha spenta, the "Holy Immortals," six in number, who are six

#### THE TWO PRINCIPLES

These two Primordial Principles in One,  
Of Light and Darkness, Good and Ill,  
that seem

Apart from one another, yet are bound  
Inseparably together, each to each—

In Thought, in Word and Action, everywhere  
Are they to operate; and the wise  
Walk on the side of Light, while the lowly  
Follow the other until they grow wise.

These eminent Two, in mutual wrestle-play,  
Give birth to Twin Desires, high and low,  
That shape as Hate-Mentality to some,  
In others as the Better Mind of Love.

O Mighty Lord of Wisdom, Mazda! Supreme, infinite, Universal Mind!  
Ahura, Thou that givest Life to all!

Grant me the power to control this mind,  
This lower mind of mine, this egoism,  
And put an end to all Duality,  
And gain the reign of One, as is desired  
Unconsciously by even the graceless ones,  
The evil sinners, in their heart of hearts.

(From the *Gathas* by Dr. Bhagawan Das)

aspects of the Supreme. Together with the Supreme Ahure Mazda, these six constitute the Holy-Immortal Heptad, the seven rays of the Eternal White Radiance of Divinity. Among these Amesha-spente, the place given to Vohu Mano is perhaps the most prominent. In this name also the element Mano is to be noted. The usual rendering of this name is "Good Mind" or "Good Thought". But I would translate the name as "Loving Mind". Vohu Mano is the "Love aspect" of God, and the Path of Vohu Mano is the Path of Love and Devotion.

tion, the Bhakti Marga. It is the Path of the Mystic who seeks God through Love. In Vohu Mano, as described in the *Gathas*, we find the germ of the idea which gave the great poetry of the Sufis several hundred years after the Prophet Zarathushtra. For Vohu Mano is the *ishq* of the Sufi.

*Ishq*—Love (for God)—Worship of God  
—Devotion to God

*Ashaka*—Lover (of God)—Worshipper—  
Devotion of God

## Zoroastrian Water-Worship

Rev. Dastur Khurshed Dabu  
[Bombay]

Parasas, as followers of Zarathushtra, the Prophet of Iran, are usually called Fire-worshippers. They do maintain Fire as a sacred emblem of Divinity in their temples. Fire is termed the *zoo* of God, and no sacred rite is performed without the presence of this element. Five times a day, a significant ceremony is gone through at the altars of Zoroastrian temples. The main object of this service is the installation of the angel of fire by invocation and preparation of a throne. The pedestal is treated as the feet and duly washed. Ultimately a bell rings out the absolution of evil thoughts words and deeds with nine strokes on a gong.

Parasas are Nature-worshippers. The sun is adored as "the most majestic and most beautiful body of God". Homage is offered to trees, mountains, stars, the moon and to waters of all types. "Through Nature to Nature's God" is the aim of a Zoroastrian daily devotion. Water presents one view of Divinity.

### Use of Water in Rituals

Water plays a very important part in the major Zoroastrian rituals of holy Sacri-

fice (Yatha). Water is taken out of the temple-well with reverence and purity of thought. In the course of the sacred rite, it is mixed with milk. This milk has to be drawn from an animal with recitation of certain Mantras. This mixture is put into a mortar, and twigs of pomegranate tree are added symbolizing immortality (as the twigs are known as "ever-green"). These are cut from the tree with similar reverential homage and address of adoration. Finally, the twigs of a Persian plant (called Homal) symbolizing Divine Wisdom, are added, and the process of pounding is carried on simultaneously with that of exorcism by strokes sounded on the metallic surface of the chalice. The mixture is frequently passed through a strainer dish with nine holes (symbolizing the physical vesture with its nine apertures). In holding up this dish there is the commemoration of the departed souls that are in tune with their monads. Finally, the extract thus prepared is poured back into the well from which pure water (Prakriti) was originally drawn.

I have only described the bare outline

of this rite), which takes about three hours to consummate. As it proceeds, water has to be magnetized with a ring, over which the heat of the sacred hull is wound like a condenser. One hundred and one holy names of God are pronounced (with bated breath) during this magnetizing process. Thereafter the water is termed "Zaotra" (Force or Power). From this attack the work-table is constantly washed, and also the metallic wires, twenty-two of them tied to a bundle and placed between two tripods. Each tripod has a crescent shape at the top and has three legs. It is the representation of "four-horned, three-legged" occult fire mentioned to the Vedic rites. After scores of times of washing, this bundle (tying like a prostrate prisoner between the two poles) is liberated, and the tripods are laid down, as if retired from service! These wires represent channels of occult vital forces for men, and a twenty-third wire is used like a sprinkler over its twenty-two prostrate colleagues showering the blessings from above, for the uplift of dormant centres.

#### An Object of Worship

Throughout the Zoroastrian scriptures, water is an object of sacred worship almost on a par with the fire. Parsees congregate at sea-shores and river banks for this special prayer almost every day. To a Theosophist, much of this water-worship has a deep occult significance. Many of the references to a sacred river (Ardvis-Ure) would be nonsensical, if taken literally. For example, the water of this river is deemed equal to all the waters of the "seven continents!" Its confluence is an ocean wherein stands an animal with three legs, also a fish with 100 eyes! The water of this river "purifies man's progeny and woman's womb, and provides milk to the mother." The worship is forbidden "during the night." The consecrated water,

if treated grossly, is supposed to do harm to the unholly, and may lead to paralysis of the tongue! Evidently this refers to etheric and astral vital channels within the microcosm. It probably signifies the physical system of procreation. The seven continents are perhaps seven regions of important nerve-plexuses, and the reverse flow of the river is a mystical allusion to the celibate Magi's occult exercises to transmute and sublimate sex-urge. The philologists are satisfied with their identification of this river with Oxus—forgetting all the allusions to its being spread over all the continents!

#### Aspects of Water

The well is the Cosmic Source. The magnetized water is the divine grace for exalting our latent spiritual nature "Water" in Zoroastrianism has various connotations, probably as Iran was influenced by its rule over Babylonians, Assyrians, Medes, Achamenians and Parthians, each having their own peculiar sacred foci and rites. Let me put down a few of the aspects of water (Apt in Avesta) as they have to be distinguished variously, with reference to the context, to the holy scriptures:

These are (1) Physical water with its purifying and cleansing properties, so that a Zoroastrian is enjoined never to pollute streams, lest man's health should suffer. It is a deadly sin to consign corpses to the sea or a tank. (2) The cardiac centre is referred to as watery. The term "Anahats" occurs in the Avesta as well as in the Vedas, pertaining to this centre. (3) Primeval matter is referred to as water, in the second stage of the earth's evolution. It is "Fohast" or Maha Prakriti, before the biological cells came into being. Milk is added at a later stage to symbolize this. (4) The Yogic currents which are later turned upwards during the sublimation of the creative urge. The word "Ardvi" used for this inner river

is linguistically allied to Sanskrit "Urdhva" or the upward-turned (5) In Zoroastrianism there is a reference to an angel who presides over "the source of water," bearing the name 'Barzoi' which literally means exaltation Man's emotions are "fluid" in occultism The ocean of emotion is the astral plane As the apax thereof the exaltation of all feelings is purified under the mastery of our Spirit (6) In another grand ritual of Zoroastrianism, two vessels are consecrated and magnetized one containing hull's urine and another full of pure water Their significance seems to be the negative and the positive aspects of man's nature Both are later used as talismans in sacred ablutions of Parsees It is again a reference to one's animal nature being transmuted and purified A priest during his retreat of nine nights, is not permitted to "touch water" with his hands, and a wat-dream disqualifies him from the attainment of the retreat These are but veils concealing the mystic meaning of water as the predominant creative urge in man, which through Yogic exercises has to be turned upwards

#### Seven Types of Water

The "seven types of water" are another mystery They are invoked during the holy rite of Yasna They seem to refer to the seven ethereal centres in man I would enumerate the Theosophical Chakras first, before giving their Zoroastrian equivalents I quote them from below upwards because that is the serial order in Avesta (7) the asecret excretary Mufadhara (6) the splen or suprarenal, (5) the solar or navel (4) the cardiac or Anshata (3) the thoracic one at the neck (2) the eye brow centre and (1) the crown of the head, wherein is symbolized the plexus of 'one thousand petals'

The Zoroastrian terms of these are (7) Maekanti—the sprinkler (6) Hehavasti—the accumulator or reservoir, (5) Fravzangh—the onward rushing or torrential, (4)

Hwapanq—containing the best water, the elixir, (3) Huparethwa—well-expanded and bridge-like, (2) Hwogzathao—good gazing or revealing and (1) Hushnathras—host for complete bath These seven types have a further commentary in a subsequent paragraph which contains symbolical terms as "maternal," "serpent-like," "full of vitality," etc, leaving no doubt in our mind about their essential nature

#### Symbolic Importance

I should add one more aspect that had been evolved in later Chaldaean astrology—the influence of Venus (the Persian name for it is 'Nahid" and is allied to the cardiac centre named "Anshata") The love aspect of the planet has much to do with man's own emotions The exaltation of Venus coincides with that of man's altruistic nature, developing from astral waters the great gift of Buddha—the intuitional flash of wisdom It is the devotional path to God

Water which contains the essence of sacramental Homa is supposed to 'give immortality—make a man perfect granting him wisdom and magnanimity It is not to be poured on earth It is to be held in a golden vessel It is exalting through righteousness It can make the pauper rich It can give illumination to students," and so on! Zoroastrianism even in its present abbreviated form (only about  $\frac{1}{6}$  of the original sacred literature of this ancient faith is now extant) is full of such occult substrata meant for the eager seekers Parsees owe so much to Theosophy in its having expounded such teachings in their true significance Some years ago a few misguided people were asking the question, "Can a Theosophist be a Parsee High Priest? The true answer is Every priest should be a true Theosophist as otherwise he cannot guide the followers of his faith in matters concerning God the Universe, the purpose of the human life and so on.

The worship of water was not instituted merely because of poetic fancy, that is to say, seeing God's presence in fountainal. It inculcated absolute purity of finer vehicles, control of passions, 'trans-austhan-tiation' of man's lower emotions into finer ones and ultimately the merging of his individual personality like a dew drop into the ocean of one homogeneous consciousness. Even today 'the holy bath' is

a very curious ritual with Parsi priests (with its ground-tracing-board plan, 84 stones, the dog, etc), and at the end of the ceremony, the aspirant pronounces his communion with God in a formula of apostolic succession. One of the eight office-bearers of the mystic Mithra ritual was known as 'the one bathing candidate'. The baptismal rite has its origin there. Our homage to the holy waters! May they purify us all! Amen!

## Religion and Man

Sri Swami Sivacanda

The divine play of manifestation, through its scenes of appearing and disappearing in the variegated colours of life and death, drives home to mankind the lesson that this life is only an act in the stage of becoming, where many parts are played and no part in itself is complete and enough to give the character of wholeness to the play. Every actor in the stage behaves in such a way that he does not portray himself as an unrelated independent personality but endeavours to be an integral part of the entire play.

This behaviour of the actor fitted to the wholeness of the play is his emotional affinity, which unites all actors to the whole which is the ultimate purpose of religion. Religion shows him that he is a part of the whole, trying to abide by the law of the whole, and aiming at fulfilling the purpose of the whole, for the whole is truth and the good of all is included in it, and no one can exist independently of the whole.

Man can never live without God, for God is the whole and man is its component. There is one God, the one Self of all being, the one law, the inexorable law of cause and effect, there is one religion, the indispensable religion of Self-realization. Everyone is only one Self. As life has been made physically comfortable and comparatively effortless by modern inventions, the ease-loving man is prone to disregard the place of religion in his life and exalt the values of a materialistic civilization. But events have always disclosed the unreliability of the purely objective views and methods of physical science since it is the experience of men that he is not really happier and the world is not in fact happier even after his arduous attempts of extracting out of the external nature its latent resources in order to utilize the same for his own purposes. Where is satisfaction, where is happiness and where is peace, then?

Is anyone who has deeply and correctly thought over his conditions and the world's vicissitudes, capable of asserting that the struggle for advancement through the physical methods has ended in the solace of man? The purely physical outlook is not compatible with the inner truth of the real man, for, religious discipline and not bodily pleasure is the rule to be followed in the course of right living. Let it not be thought that religion is dogmatic, other worldly, per tradition of blind believers or irrational emotionalists. Religion is the most rational science of life itself, the science of man as he essentially is, not merely as he pretences himself to be. Religion is the way to the realization of the higher perfection. If perfection is a possibility, religion is the only means befitting the human ideal.

**Chapter Eleven**

**JUDAISM**

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*Sri Swami Sivananda*

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**Chapter Eleven**

**JUDAISM**

# Judaism

Sri Swami Sivananda

Judaism constitutes the religious doctrines and rites of the Jews as enjoined in the laws of Moses.

Hebrew is one of the descendants of Jacob, an Israelite, a Jew.

Judaism is related to Zoroastrianism. At present it has a few millions of followers. It has given rise to two great religions of the world i.e., Christianity and Mohammedanism. The Mohammedans admit that their religion has connections with Judaism. The Koran also is very clear on this point.

Zoroastrian conception of Ahura Mazda as the Supreme Being is perfectly identical with the idea of Elohim (God) or Jehovah which we find in the books of the Old Testament.

Abraham, the Prophet, was the first man who has revealed God to all Jews. He is the Founder of the Hebrew race.

Isaac had two sons, viz., Esau and Jacob, and their descendants are the Christians and Jews respectively.

Abraham had two sons, one from Sarah and one from Hagar, the Egyptian woman, viz., Isaac and Ishmael, who are the fathers of Jews and Mohammedans, respectively.

## Old and New Testament

The Old Testament contains the sacred writings of the ancient Jewish race. The newer portion is known as the New Testament which was begun after the coming of Jesus Christ more than nineteen hundred years ago.

Long before Jesus came to this world, the Jews wrote and studied their sacred books. These were written in their Hebrew script. The old Hebrew books were translated into Greek about two hundred years before the Christian era.

The books of the Jews were arranged into three main divisions. The first was called "The Law". It dealt with the laws

of the world. These books are now the first part of the Bible, viz., Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. The second class was that of the Prophets. It included Joshua, Isaiah and Jeremiah. Psalms and Proverbs constituted the third part. The Old Testament contains 39 books.

The New Testament contains 27 books. The first four books are Gospels which describe the life of Christ on this earth. The next book tells us of the Acts of the Apostles, particularly of the important Apostle, Paul. The twenty-one shorter books give out the ideas underlying the Christian faith of the early Christians. The last book is the book of Revelations. It gives a description of the series of visions, viz., the lamb of God and the heavenly city. The author is John, the favourite Apostle of Jesus. All these books were written in Greek which was the language of the educated at the beginning of the Christian era.

## Jewish Sects

The Law was set forth as a complete system by which men and women should live. By the Law was understood in a special sense the Pentateuch. Every word of Pentateuch was considered as inspired and an immediate revelation to Moses.

(a) There was a need for explanation of the Law. The scribes were the interpreters of the law. They explained and applied the rules of the Torah to special cases. The scribes were recognized as the legislators and the judges of Israel. Their decisions had the force of Law. The first scribes were priests.

(b) The fraternity of the Pharisees were the popular or the nationalist party. They believed in the doctrine of immortality, resurrection of the body, the existence of

angels and spirits. As religious teachers they upheld the authority of oral tradition as of equal validity with the written Law. They were inclined to fatalism in the question of the freedom of the will. The Zealots represented one extreme side of the Pharisaic movement.

(c) Sadducees. They were aristocratic priests. They held to the letter of the Mosaic revelation. They denied the authority of the oral tradition as interpreted by the Pharisees. They taught complete freedom of the will in moral action. They had no belief in angels or spirits. They did not accept the doctrine of immortality as a deduction from the Pentateuch.

(d) The Essenes. The Essenes followed celibacy, isolation, silence, ceremonial ablutions, abstinenace from animal food. They practised asceticism. They did worship of the sun and the angels. They believed in the dualistic theory of good and evil and the symbolism of light. They abstained from sacrifices, and temple-worship.

#### Torah

The Prophets of Israel were the great religious leaders who brought great progress in Hebrew thought. Rabbis also were authoritative teachers. They worked very hard in the field of Torah. They produced the massive Talmudic literature. They were the representatives of Pharisaism. Talmud is indispensable for a knowledge of Hebrew thought.

The Torah was given in ten words. Each word became a voice. Every voice was divided into 70 voices, all of which shone and glittered before the eyes of all Israel.

Torah is the key-word in the life and literature of the Hebrews. It denotes the divine revelation to Israel on Mount Sinai as embodied in the five Books of Moses. The Torah (Law) as given in Moses consists of 613 commandments which are

the essence of the divine and terrestrial mysteries. Torah embodies a way of life rather than a form of belief.

Moses received the Torah (Law, direction, instruction) on Sinai and handed it down to Joshua, Joshua to the elders, the elders to the prophets, and the prophets handed it down to the men of the Great Synagogue, a school of zealous men created by Ezra, the Scribe in the fifth century B.C. The function of the synagogue was to study and teach Torah. The Synagogue was a church, a school and a court of justice. It was a house of instruction. It was the chief means by which the teaching and influence of the Scribes were extended and by which the enactments of the Law were interpreted and enforced.

The unity of God, the Incorporeality of God and the Holiness of God are the main features of Judaism.

God gave His ten commandments to Moses on the Mount Sinai. Moses went up unto God. The Lord called unto him out of the mountain and said: 'Thou shalt thou say to the house of Jacob and tell the children of Israel.' Moses went up unto the mountain and a cloud covered the mount.

God has given to humanity 248 hours which work according to 248 parts of the Law and 365 nerves. These two come to 613 counsels given to man by the Lord in order that he may be perfect in attachment to Him.

#### Mosaic Cosmogony

This is the Mosaic account of Cosmogony. On the first day heaven and earth were created, on the second firmament and waters, on the third dry land, grass the herbs and fruit-trees, on the fourth, lights, the sun, the moon, the stars, on the fifth, moving creatures, winged fowls, great whales, on the sixth living creatures, cattle, creepers, beasts, man. In the Genesis,

the Creation ends with the creation of man.

God created Adam on the sixth day and gave him the charge of the animals. Adam had three children, viz., Cain, Abel and Sheth. Cain killed Abel. The descendants of Cain were drowned in the flood. The descendants of Sheth are all the humanity of the world.

The Lord took Adam and put him into the garden of Eden to till it and to keep it.

#### Tenets of Judaism

The Jews believe in resurrection, in angels and in the existence of two powers, viz., God and the Devil or Satan.

The Jews believe that every man's actions will be weighed on the day of Judgment, in a balance. Men will have to pass after their resurrection along the bridge of Hell.

The soul hovers round the body for three days after death. It is unwilling to be separated from the body.

The simile of the seed of corn which is laid in the lap of the mother earth and which afterwards shoots out into countless blades is often instances as a proof of resurrection. When the seed of the wheat which was buried in the earth springs up in the manifold clothings of the blades, how much more will the virtuous rise again, who have been interred in their vestments.

Three keys lie in the hands of God and are entrusted to no delegate. These are the keys of the rain, that of birth, and that of resurrection.

The Jews believe in a future life and in Heaven and Hell. There are seven Heavens. The Heaven of Eden is composed of precious stones. The Hell has sevenfold divisions.

The unity of God is the cardinal principle of the religion of the Hebrews. God is bodiless. This is also a doctrine of great

importance. God is ever pure and holy. This is the third important attribute of God.

He is the Creator of the entire world. He is the Father of all His creatures. He is just and merciful. He is without inequity.

The Jewish sages have spoken much about the efficacy and power of repentance. Man's fate depends in the last resort upon repentance and prayer, particularly prayer with tears, because there is no gate which tears cannot penetrate. The end and aim of all wisdom is repentance. Happy is the man who repents. The gates of repentance never close. Repentance prolongs a man's life. The tears of true repentance are not shed in vain. Even the most righteous shall not attain to so high a place in heaven as the truly repentant. Even an hour spent in repentance with a contrite heart in this world is preferable to a whole life in the world to come. Repent sincerely with a contrite heart and pray to God for forgiveness. After repentance you should not repeat the same wicked act.

#### The Ten Commandments

(i) I am the Lord thy God, who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

(ii) Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that in the water under the earth, thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

(iii) Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will

not hold him guiltless that leketh his name in vain.

(iv) Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord, thy God; for if thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.

(v) Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

(vi) Thou shalt not kill.

(vii) Thou shalt not commit adultery.

(viii) Thou shalt not steal.

(ix) Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

(x) Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's.

## Analects of Jewish Scriptures

Collected by Sri Swami Sivaswami

1. Sufferings are a path of life. Sufferings etou more than sacrifice.

2. Be still and know that I am God.

3. The body is the scabbard of the soul.

4. Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.

5. The value of words uttered with the lips is determined by the devotion of the heart.

6. Weigh thy words to a balance and make a door and bar for thy mouth.

7. He who glances at his lust even at the corner of a woman's heel is as if he had committed adultery with her.

8. All the wickedness is but little to the wickedness of a woman.

9. Ten measures of speech descended to the world. Women took nine and men one (Women are very talkative).

10. God did neither make woman from man's head that she should rule over him; nor from his feet that she should be his slave; but from his side that she should be near his head.

11. Of the woman came the beginning of sin and through her we slide.

12. Give me not plague but not the plague of the heart and any wickedness but not the wickedness of a woman.

13. In three things a man's character is recognized—in the wise cup, in his purse and in his anger.

14. Be strong as a leopard, and swift as an eagle, fleet-footed as a gazelle, and brave as a lion—to do the will of thy Father who is in the heaven.

15. More flesh, more worms; more wealth, more care; more women, more witchcraft; more maid-servants, more lewdness; more men-servants, more thieving; more Torah, more life; more assiduity, more wisdom; more counsel, more understanding; more charity, more peace.

16. He gives little who gives much with a frown; he gives much who gives little with a smile.

17. He that gives should never remember; he that receives should never forget.

18. The best trading is with God.

19. Fear God and keep His commandments, because this is the whole duty of men. For God shall bring every work into

judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.

20. A rich man carries his God in his pocket; a poor man in his heart.

21. Every word of God is pure. He is a shield unto them who put their trust in them.

22. Whosoever walks towards God one cubit, God runs towards him twain.

23. God sends the remedy before the disease.

24. One hour of repentance and good actions in this world is more than all the life of the world to come. An hour of bliss in the world to come is more than all the

life of this world.

25. Be first in greeting every man.

26. He who denies his quilt, doubles his quilt.

27. Be swift to hear. Let thy life be sincere.

28. Give answer with patience.

29. The best preacher is the heart; the best teacher is time; the best hook is the world; the best friend is God.

30. That man is a hero who can make a friend of a loss.

31. Impurity in the beginning is like a spider's web; in the end it is like a cart rope.

## Hebrew Sayings

Faith is the father of all.

We can win eternity by virtue of a single hour.

An empty-headed man cannot be a sin-feigning man, nor can an ignorant man be pious.

The path of duty in this world is the road to salvation in the next.

One loose cord loosens many.

Whoever is compassionate towards his fellow-haloes, and forgives wrong done to him, compassion is shown to him by God.

Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.

The chastisements of God are afflictions of love.

The blindness of the heart is indeed blindness, and the loud voice of prayer is of no avail.

Loving kindness is greater than law, and the charities of life are more than all ceremonies.

Life is but a loan to man; death is the creditor who will one day claim it.

May you find your world in your life, and may your future be in the life of the world to come, and may your hope last from generation to generation.

First learn, then form opinions.

God sends the remedy before the disease.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits—who forgives all thine inequities; who heals all thy diseases, who redeems thy life from destruction, who crowns thee with love and compassion, who satisfies thy mouth with good things, so that thy youth is received like the eagle's.

When the wise is angry, he is no longer wise.

A man is never impoverished by almsgiving.

It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes.

Look out at the pitcher, but at that which is in it.

# The Hebrew Concept of "Torah"

Sri Raphael Lowe  
[London]

*Torah* in the wide sense is knowledge and guidance for action as revealed by God, and it can also mean application on the part of man to the study of that revelation. In an apparently narrower sense *Torah* means the Five Books of Moses that contain, either actually or intrinsically, the revelation at Sinai—for Judaism the focal point in human history. But this is not really a narrower sense, because for Jews these five books—called the written *Torah*—are a sort of shorthand precis of the revelation at Sinai. There is, besides this written *Torah*, also an oral *Torah*—itself largely written down now—which is dynamic and covers the whole of Jewish life and outlook. It has developed continuously as Jews have faced the world and ever-widening experience. Because development is a natural and organic growth, the oral *Torah* and the written *Torah* can be regarded as a unity. This holds good whether Moses actually wrote the Five Books as we have them now or whether, as many scholars believe, they are the work of a number of authors from different centuries. The roots of both this written *Torah* and of the oral *Torah* which contains institutions clearly of a later origin, are intertwined on Mount Sinai.

## Expansion of "Torah"

We may visualize the continual expansion of *Torah* as a piece of embroidery that is being perpetually worked on a canvas stretching into infinity. The twin fabrics with the Ten Commandments are at the centre, surrounded by a narrow band consisting of the written *Torah*. As Jewish experience broadens and deepens, stitches are added to the Isayman's eye, perhaps

haphazardly, but a subtle design, intelligible to the expert, gives a pattern to the whole. The entire fabric is relevant to contemporary Jewish life and thought, in which a historical consciousness is an indispensable part.

True, there are features in it neither practised nor practicable—such as the sacrificial system based on the Temple—and some that are frankly obsolete, like the injunction not to snuff a watch to live. Though such things may sometimes be allowed to fade nothing whatever may be cut out, or the fabric will soon disintegrate. Judaism will never consign anything once adopted into its *Torah* to the lumber room or the rubbish heap. *Torah* is a scheme into which all ethical endeavour, scientific investigation, and philosophical speculation can and must be integrated and the individual and corporate striving of the people of Israel so as to integrate it in every generation constitutes its testimony to the truth that life is to be ordered in accordance with God's revealed Will.

It is only in virtue of its striking towards communion with God through *Torah* that Israel wishes to regard itself as a chosen people and feels justified in maintaining some reserve with regard to its surroundings.

## "Olam"

The other word I want to explain is important to us because of what it does not mean. That word is *Olam*, which originally meant the remote past or future but which in post-biblical Hebrew came to mean the World. Now in English we have several adjectives—secular, mundane, and worldly that imply that the World with

a capital 'W' is a place hostile to spiritual values, and a person who concerns himself with spiritual values is 'unworldly' or 'other-worldly.' These words have this meaning because of the attitude to life of many members of the early Church, who used the Latin words from which they are derived in this derogatory sense and applied them when translating the Bible as renderings of the Hebrew *Olam*.

But what I want to make quite clear is that *Olam* in Hebrew never carried the anti-spiritual suggestion that is implied in Latin and English by mundane, secular, worldly, or the world with a capital 'W.' On the contrary, the division between sacred and secular is one that Judaism can scarcely understand and certainly will not recognize. Certain things in life are, of course, free for common use and other things are recognized as 'holy'—though the Hebrew word for holy really means 'reserved to God.'

Now holiness is felt to be pervasive, or even contagious, anything that is free for common use can, in certain circumstances, be made holy. *Torah* can show man how to spiritualize his use of material resources into a way of life more worthy of Him who provides them and who is pleased to reveal something of Himself and His will through *Torah*.

Does Judaism offer an escape from life or encourage its exploitation and redemption? Escapism is a way of circumventing the limitations and frustrations of life by concentrating on something sufficiently absorbing to enable one to ignore them. But the object of *Torah* is to infuse all aspects of life with a consciousness of God's presence and will.

#### Future of Judaism

Picture to yourselves once again the imaginary piece of embroidery. At any time the amount of tapestry completed

must correspond to the full sum of human experience, if it does not, and Judaism has nothing but a negative attitude to the moral, political, and metaphysical problems of the day, it is failing in its duty. Judaism today must face up to such problems as atomic warfare, apartheid and the knowledge gained by modern exploration of the universe. The answer to all such problems must be worked into the tapestry, and the pattern—so far completed—will suggest the lines on which their solution is to be sought.

But although the underlying principle of *Torah* excludes escapism if we think for a moment of the history of the Jewish people, we can see how easily devotion to *Torah* can become a form of escapism and even more easily be mistaken for one by an outside observer. In the modern world we are so used to a cast iron division between sacred and secular that Judaism with its refusal to tolerate such a distinction and its deep awareness of spiritual values may easily be thought of as 'other-worldly,' and dismissed, quite wrongly as uninterested in the things of this world.

Such a mistake is all the more likely because Jews have so often in the course of their history been excluded by a hostile environment from full-scale participation in the life of their country. Thus persecution and frustration have often forced Jewry upon itself, and since it is the cardinal duty of every Jew to meditate day and night on *Torah* as a means of God's revealing Himself to man it is not difficult to see how often, surrounded by suspicion or actual persecution, he might be tempted to regard the whole thing as a means of revelation, as an end in itself. The Synagogues and houses of study have indeed proved a haven of refuge to the Jew throughout his tragedy ridden history. But so long as the sanction behind *Torah*

asmoly, God's will to reveal Himself to man, is borne in mind, Judaism is safe from escapism; once it is forgotten and devotion to Torah has become so snobby or intellectual pastime, Judaism is not really authoctic.

### Practical Religion

Because Judaism eschews escapism, it has frowned on asceticism and has kept a careful watch on mysticism. No faith is complete without a mystical element and indeed the whole idea of Torah is a mystery; but mysticism, if cultivated, can so easily dissipate itself into escapism. All Jewish mysticism presupposes as its basis an intellectual appreciation of Torah and its teachings.

But although intellecticism is the life-blood of a healthy Judaism, it would be a mistake to think of it as a religious mood solely for the highbrow. The first demand of Torah, from highbrow and lowbrow alike, is to live an ethical life. Raba, who lived in the fourth century of this era, made this clear in figurative language. At the last judgment, he said, the first question a man will be asked is: 'Were you honest in business?' Only afterwards is he asked: 'Did you regularly devote time to Torah?' A further item in the questionnaire is: 'Did you look forward to the salvation?' But Reba concluded, the fear of the Lord is the main thing.

By living a full life the Jew has the opportunity and the privilege of emphasizing through Torah consciousness of God's presence to the daily round—private, domestic and public—and in connection

with exceptional events whether prodigious or unforeseen, joyful or sad. The idea is expressed, in motto-like form, in the divine command addressed to Abraham, which we ought to translate thus: 'I am the Almighty God; Walk thou before me, so shalt thou be whole.'

### Moral for Perfection

If Judaism demands that one makes the best of life's opportunities, its very insistence that only if life is lived in the consciousness of the presence of God can it be complete, constitutes the challenge to redeem it by making it meaningful. But we must be careful with this word redemtion, as it may carry certain implications that are not applicable to Judaism, which knows no doctrine of original sin. Man, although very far from perfect, has in Torah the means of making himself perfect. God's grace consists in His having freely revealed to all mankind the opportunity, seized by Israel, of learning to know Him and His ways through Torah, a mystical pattern of thought, belief, and action that is eternal, infinite, and so fundamental to life that God himself is pictured as having Instructed Torah in order to place the order of Creation.

Torah can thus show man how to redeem life by making it harmonized with the pattern that underlies the cosmos. In every generation it must be Israel's purpose consistently to extend the confines that bound this way of life until as the noblest prophet has put it, the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.\*

What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellowmen. That is the whole of the Torah, and the remainder is but commentary. Go, learn it.

Turn it, and turn it over again, for everything is in it, and contemplate it, and wax grey and old over it, and stir not from it. You can have no better rule than this.

—Talmud

# Israel Baal Schem Tov

## —THE HASIDIC MESSAGE FOR OUR TIMES—

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If gives me great pleasure and joy to have this opportunity of writing about Israel Baal Schem Tov. Ever since I was a student and came into personal contact with Jews from Eastern Europe, my heart was filled with admiration and love for this wonderful man and for his magnificent example and message, which is as valid and as needed in our times as it was in his. Just ponder this profound saying of his: "When we yield our spirit to God, we can let our mouth say what it will; for then all our words and actions are bound to their root in Heaven." And hear this: "When someone makes a mistake, before you blame him think first: 'If I had done this, what excuse would I find for myself, to justify myself?' Then give the other person the benefit of your excuse. Only thus are we to understand the Divine command 'Love thy neighbour as thyself.' This, my friends, is the ultimate in love."

### A Mystic Religious Movement

Hasidism is a mystic, religious movement which originated in Poland towards the end of the 18th century. It developed very rapidly against a background of stark tragedy, gloom and hopelessness, which had taken hold of the Jewish people. A false messiah, Sabbatai Zevi of Smyrna (died 1676), had held the Jews in high hopes that the time of their suffering, the diaspora, their dispersion among all the nations, was about to end. Instead, when his false claim was challenged, in order to save his life he became a convert to Islam—and thus a source of bitter disappointment and despair in his countless followers. Shortly after that, the Jews fell

victims to pogroms, Cossack massacres, causing social and economic ruin to Jewish life in Eastern Europe. To add to the misery of these unfortunate people, their own leaders proved ineffective, lacking both understanding and sympathy. The sterile, bookish attitude of the Talmudic scholars did little, if nothing, to improve the lot of the masses. On the contrary, they looked down upon the common people as 'Am-ha-Arez' as ignoramuses, who could not fulfil the traditional Jewish command of learning Torah, or being learned in the study of the Law of God.

### Advent of a Redeemer

In those days of darkness and despondency, Israel ben Elizier, later called the Baal Schem Tov, suddenly appeared. He gave the people new hope, new vision, a fresh new lease of life, so much so, that within a century, half of the Jews in Eastern Europe cheerfully followed the Hasidic way of life. Like so many prophets before him, he also came from insignificant surroundings, and he had no authority to support him other than his own existence, his own conviction. Israel, in Hebrew, means 'fighter for God'. And Baal Schem Tov means, the good master of the Name, the sacred Name of the Lord, thus indicating his power to effect miracles. Born in 1699 in Okup, a hamlet near the Polish-Rumanian border, he died in 1760 in Meczhucz a town in the Ukraine. He was a true Saint and a Mystic.

A Mystic is a person who has merged himself in the Supreme, in the cosmic or universal Reality, whose soul has grasped

the infinite simplicity of Truth God is the fundamental Truth of the universe. God is the basic Reality of the universe. God is not bound by our human beliefs, opinions, religions or philosophies. To attain that mystic realization, that cosmic awareness, we require a special process becoming free from personal desire, from ego, from finiteness. Let me try to give an illustration. Take butter. As we all know, butter comes from milk, it is contained in milk. Yet, it requires a special process, churning, to get butter out of milk. And though butter is contained in milk, milk cannot take the place of butter (e.g., no bread or for baking). Likewise, the Infinite is ever contained within (and without) our individuality. But it takes this special process of discrimination and self-decisi<sup>n</sup> to extract the Infinite out of our individual, finite existence. The mystic's outlook is somewhat like this: "Lord, You are ever before me. Looking wherever I may, You are there. All things I experience through You. In Thy light, do I see the light!"

#### Awareness of the Divine

Hasidism contains the mystic, religious teachings of the Baal Schem Tov and of his successors. The word Hasidism is derived from the Hebrew 'Hasidut'—allegiance and piety. It signifies the spiritual will to live one's life in the service and contemplation of God. And this devotion is personified in the leader of a Hasidic community, who is called the Tzaddik. This word means 'he who has stood the test, who has proven faithful.' The Tzaddik's great influence and effectiveness spring from the fact that he is a complete person his heart and mind and soul are one, are integrated. As Rabbi Abraham Jehoschua of Apt (died 1776) put it "Love the Lord thy God and Love thy neighbour" are two commandments. In

Truth however the Love of God and the Love of man are one and the same thing." And this is the task of the Tzaddikism. To unite the Love of God and the Love of man.

The theological emphasis of the Baal Schem Tov's teachings was not based on rabbinic intellectualism, but on Shekkinah—the awareness of the Divine Presence and of man's communion with God, on Kavvah—the intent and power of genuine prayer; on Tschuhah—the turning back to God in humility and purity, and on joy. This holy joy was fully expressed at all Hasidic gatherings through singing, dancing, and in their boast 'l'chayim'—to life. Of joy, the Baal Schem Tov said: "It is the purpose of my existence to live with and for my fellow-beings on the basis of my love for the Eternal, and to show to all that God is served best through joy, and not through rigidity, severeness or sadness." Only a person whose life is filled with joy can truly love. Meng Tze, a Chinese philosopher of the fourth century B.C., correctly summed up the human situation in one sentence: "The ways of life are two: love and the want of love." Love, and love alone, is the fulfillment of the Law. All else is words, wonderful words may be, but, all the same, only words, a maze of words, a jungle of words—just words, and ever more words. This is so well illustrated by a saying of Rabbi Baruch of Mezchitz (died 1811), the Baal Schem's grandson. Once, a prominent person said to him "Now let us hear the teachings from you, Rabbi. You speak so wonderfully." "Rather than just speak wonderfully," he replied, "I should be stricken dumb."

#### "Shekkinah"

Now, about the Shekkinah. Just as air surrounds this earth and fills everything in it, even so is God omnipresent, ever-present. Thus the Mystic is continuously

conscious of the Divine Presence And every aspect of life must reflect this awareness Religion is the Truth of our integrated existence The practice of the consciousness of the Presence of God in every aspect of life—is Religion In fact, only this is Religion Religion is not something that can be dishad out, as it were, in weekly or daily masses Neither is Religion a show-husiaoss It is worse than usalass to put on spiritual etcs "I will not be mocked," said the Lord (OT) Evary ect of ours can end shond ba reodared sacred, which means full and complata—by the innar consciousness not by the outer ceremonias, in which we perform it and this holds good for everything from sleep to activities, from eating to intimacy Such action is prayer, is up-liftig our soul to God, becoming one with God That is 'Kiddush ha Schem'—the sanctification of the Lord's Name

#### Concept of Prayer

Now about the Hasidic concept of prayer Prayer must never be allowed to degeneraate into monotonous, parrot-like repetitions In prayer we aim at the Highest, at the Ultimata And before beginnol to pray, we must take great care to prepare ourselves In the words of Rabbi Baruch of Mezhizc 'I must enlact myself and make myself a place to be ready and fit for the descending of the Divine Presence'

But if one prays mechanically and allows other thoughts to come into one's mind whilst praying one actually does wrong and thus harms one's sincerity To prepare ourselves for prayer we must first free the pure thoughts the very words from our own 'Galut' from our own separateness from our self interest and self importance from the ego Prayer is a matter of the heart As it is written in Berachot (17a) 'In prayer what matters is that one's heart is directed

towrds Heaven" That is Kavvaoch (Devotion) Only that is true praying All else is lip-service, mind-made formalities and error—missing the mark "Take away from me the noise of your festivals and of your prayers" (O.T., Amos)

These are then the basic theological concepts of Hasidism and the sweeping ancess it had was due to the devout faith of Baal Schem Tov and of his succesaors His immediate disciple, Rabbi Dov Baer, the Maggid of Meseritz (died 1772) was a preacher of outstanding teaching talent, who attracted numerous disciples, who in turn quickly spread the message of Hasidism The most outstanding of the Maggid's disciples was Rabbi Shneur Zalman the Rebbe of Ladi (died 1812) He was a profound scholar who formulated the philosophical system called HaBd, from Hochma Btina-Das uolliq wisdom understanding and knowledge

#### Opposition to Hasidism

In certain respects Hasidism though orthodox differed from traditional formalities and observances, e.g. their stress on faith rather than on traditional study of Torah This was based on "Thou shall live by hiataith" (OT, Habakuk 2:4) and "The ground you stand on is holy ground" (OT Exodus 35) This insistence on faith and not on intellectual superiority together with their great cheerfulness and their adoration of the Tzaddikim as intermediaries between God and men, as the source of both heavenly and earthly good brought them into violent opposition with orthodox Rabbinism This culminated in the 'charem' their excommunication by Rabbi Elijah ben Solomon, the Vilner Gaon the famous sage of Wilna (died 1797) He was the foremost Talmud scholar and Kabballist of his times He denounced the Hasidim as heretics and caused them to be widely persecuted In

be aware of yourselves. You must do nothing but on ear which bears what the universe of the Word is constantly saying within you. The moment you start hearing what you yourself are saying, you must stop at once."

In the days of Rabbi Pinhas (died 1791), the prayer-hook which is based on the Kavanot (permutation) of letters of the Divine Name, had just been published. His disciples obtained his permission to pray from that Kabalistic book but after a time they came to him and complained that they had lost the sense of intensified existence which prayer had always given them. The Tzaddik told them 'You have put all the strength and purposefulness of your thinking into the Kavanot of the holy names, and the combinations of the letters, and have thus deviated from the essential to make your hearts whole and dedicate them to God. That is why you have lost the live feeling of holiness."

Rabbi Pinhas said 'Whoever says that the words of the Torah are one thing and the words of the world another, must be regarded as a man who denies God."

Rabbi Shneur Zalman told his Hasidim: I was walking in the street towards evening and happened to see something improper. I was deeply troubled that I had failed to guard my eyes, placed myself with my face to a wall and cried my heart out. When I turned around I saw that it was dark and the time for the afternoon prayer had passed. Then I took counsel with myself: I extricated myself from time and said the prayer."

Rabbi Shlomo of Karlin (died 1792) said "If you want to raise a man from mud and filth, do not think it is enough to keep standing on top and reaching down to him a helping hand. You must go all the way yourself, down into mud and filth. Then take hold of him with strong hands and

pull him and yourself out into the light!"

Rabbi Israel of Koznitz (died 1814) said to God 'Lord of the world, I beg of you to redeem Israel. And if you do not want to do that, then redeem the Goym (non Jews)"

Once the Rabbi of Koznitz said 'Lord I stand before you like a messenger boy, and wait for you to tell me where to go"

"You can learn something from everything," Ahraham Yaskov, the Rabbi of Sadagorn (died 1883) once said to his Hasidim. "Everything can teach us something, and not only everything that God has created. What man has made has also something to teach us." "What can we learn from a train?" one Hasid asked dubiously. "That because of one minute one can miss everything." And from the telegraph? "That every single word is counted and charged." And the telephone? "That what we say here is heard elsewhere!"

Rabbi Yaakov Yitzchok of Pshischa (died 1814) was crossing a meadow with his disciples. Cattle put out to pasture there were lowing and where it was watered by a stream a flock of geese rose from the water with a great cackling and beating of wings. "If only one could understand what all of them are saying," exclaimed one of his disciples. "When you get to the point of understanding the very core of what you yourself are saying," said the Rabbi, "you will understand the language of all creatures."

Rabbi Simha Bunham of Pshischa (died 1827) once said "If I were to give learned and subtle interpretations of the Scriptures, I could say a great many things. But a fool says what he knows while a sage knows what he says."

When Rabbi Bunham lay dying his wife burst into tears. He said 'Dear, what are you crying for? My whole life was only that I might learn how to die."

"Where is the dwelling of God?" This was the question with which Mendel, the Rebbe of Kotzk (died 1859) surprised a number of learned men who were visiting him. They laughed at him: "What a thing to ask! Is not the whole world full of His glory?" Then Rabbi Mendel answered his own question: "God dwells wherever man lets Him in."

The Rabbi of Kotzk once said to his congregation: "What do I [ask] of you? Only three things: Not to look furtively outside yourselves, not to look furtively into others, and not to have yourselves in mind."

The Rabbi of Kotzk said: "Everything in the world can be imitated except truth. For truth that is imitated is no longer truth."

The Rabbi of Kotzk was told of a miracle-worker who could work wonders. "All that, even if true, is quite unimportant," he said. "But does he know the secret of making a devotee of God?"

Rabbi Chajim of Sender (died 1876) fell ill and suffered from a bad cough. He refused to do anything about it. But his condition worsened and the doctors, who were called to by his family, insisted that he should take their prescription. When he still refused, his oldest son tried to persuade him. But the Rabbi declared. "In 'Olam-ha-Zuriyah'—the heavenly abode—one does not use medicines!" "Indeed not," replied his son, "but neither does one cough there!" Thereupon the Rabbi said "Right is with you, my son!" and he took the medicine.

#### Need of Our Times

There are just a few of the many wonderful tales of the Hassidic masters, and they all go to show their absolute faith, devotion and God consciousness, and these are precisely the qualities that are most needed in our times. There is tremendous rest-

lessness and dissatisfaction in the world with things as they are. No sooner has man achieved something than he attempts to beat his own record, as it were, or he begins to lose interest in his achievement. There is a perpetual desire and effort towards improvements, actually this worship of efficiency and success is the modern dance around the golden calf, and despite it all, or rather because of it, there is mounting insecurity and strain and futile escapism wherever we look; and in looking around, we will see that people are willing to believe in anything and everything under the sun. In political parties, in nuclear-bombs, in capitalism, in communism, in the latest medical treatments or in old-fashioned methods and so forth. If you study an advertising campaign, you will realize that people can be made to accept almost anything from Hitler-propaganda to drinking Coca Cola. In man's credulity there is one exception, and that is the acceptance of the Reality of God's Presence and Power. That conviction is rare in most parts of the world. People prefer to rely on their own wits and achievements.

The man who takes pride in his achievements, in his position, in his ferning, in short, in his own importance, can never experience true, lasting satisfaction, happiness and harmony. He can never find You, O Lord: You can be realized only by those who understand that we possess nothing, that we are nothing. Only then can we be full of You, full of health, full of joy, full of peace.

The purpose of human existence is God-realization. God is fulfillment. God is Peace and Harmony. Live you a life of Peace and Harmony. Be a harbinger of Peace and Harmony. Spread Peace and Harmony wherever you are. Peace be with you. Shalom.

**Chapter Twelve**

**CHRISTIANITY**

# Christianity

Sri Swami Sivananda

Lord Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the King. He was the son of a carpenter of Nazareth, a large village in Galilee, the northern Province of Palestine. There came wise men from the East to Jerusalem saying "Where is he that is born, the King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East and are come to worship him."

Jesus was a Palestinian Jew of the first century. He lived with Joseph and Mary and a large family of brothers or half brothers in the house of the carpenter of Nazareth. He was baptized by John the Baptist on the banks of the river Jordan. Now he saw a vision of God's spirit descending like a dove on him. He heard a voice say unto him, 'Thou art my beloved son I am well pleased with thee.' John the Baptist was the Preceptor of Jesus.

Jesus was an incarnation of the Hebrew God Jehovah. Jesus is the Greek translation of an Aramaic name pronounced Yeshua, according to Hebrew scholars. It was altered into Jesus in English. He was also called Messiah the anointed one, or the Saviour of the World.

## Jesus in India?

Between his 18th and 32nd years of age, Jesus spent his life in India and lived like a Hindu or Buddhist monk. He had a burning Vairagya (dispassion) and spirit of renunciation. In India he assimilated Hindu ideals and principles. Some Christians do not believe in this account of the Lord's "missing period". They argue it is not specifically mentioned in the Bible. In matters connected with person who lived as far back as nearly twenty centuries there is bound to be slight divergence of view. The Old Testament naturally cannot

contain any reference. The New Testament consists of the Gospels, etc., written by his disciples after He was enlightened. It is obviously futile to search for a reference about his period of enlightenment—which was during his travels in India where he got initiation from sages and seers—in accounts of him written by people who could never have had any knowledge of his earlier days. It has been the belief of many historians that at some time during the missing period Jesus travelled to India. Anyway, there is nothing untenable to this view.

## Crucifixion

More than sixteen hundred years ago the Founder of the Christian religion was crucified as a criminal in Jerusalem under the Law of Roman Empire.

Lord Jesus predicted three times that he would die at the hands of the Jewish authorities. He also predicted of his resurrection on the third day. The charge against Jesus was that of treason, of advising the people against paying tributes to Rome and his setting himself up as the King of Jews. At the time of crucifixion there were earthquake, terrible thunder, there was darkness all over the earth. The veil inside the temple was rent in the middle. Jesus said 'Father! Into Thy hands I commend my spirit,' and having said this, he gave up the Ghost. Certain women went to anoint the body of Jesus with spices on the third day of the crucifixion. They found the stone that covered the grave removed and the body missing. There was a flash of terrible light. The guards who were on watch at the grave were not able to find out how Jesus came out of the tomb. Jesus rose from the

grave, appeared before his disciples, showed them the marks of crucifixion on his body and then ascended to the heaven. Thus was Jesus crucified. The crucifixion was done in Jerusalem.

### The Cross

Lord Jesus totally surrendered himself at the lotus feet of the Lord. He had intense faith to Him. It was the faith that sustained him throughout his life. The Cross of Jesus will remain for ever the supreme example of love and enlisting without returning evil for evil. The Cross symbolizes a great principle of life. In the Christian theology the Cross has a wonderful halo. It is not a common Cross of wood. The Cross of Jesus is a classic instance of love resisting evil and overcoming it. When Lord Jesus was put to the Cross he said "My Lord! They do not know what they are doing. Please forgive them." What a large heart and wonderful power of endurance Jesus had!

The Cross is the refuge to the penitent, the strength to the dying. It brings solace. It comforts. It heals the wounded heart. It teaches the perfection of God, the nature of sin and the way of emancipation. It is a principle of life. The Christian saints lived by the Cross. It was their great book.

### Its Significance

The Cross is sacred for Christians. It remains the glory, the purity, the divine nature and the self-sacrificing spirit of the baby of Bethlehem, whose action is the mainspring of heroic efforts of self-conquest and self-sacrifice.

It has a unique position among Christian emblems. It is the sign of Christianity. It stands as the most prominent ornament on the altars and fabrics of all Christian Churches.

He who has control over the flesh, who has crucified the flesh, who has subdued the passions, who has self-control, who

has mortified the lower nature, can best the Cross.

### Lamb of God

It is on the Cross Jesus became the Lamb of God to turn the course of the world. It is on the Cross he poured out his soul unto death for others to live. Thus he completed the will of the Father and with a loud voice said, "Father into Thy hands I commend My spirit", bowed His head and delivered up His spirit back to the Giver. Then a soldier pierced His side. A great flow of blood and water rushed out of his wounded side.

*Holy Ghost* is a spiritual emanation from the Supreme Deity. He is a guide, and consoler of all faithful Christians. He will be with them at all times until the second coming of the incarnate Deity to the person of the crucified Jesus.

Satan is the evil power that corrupts the hearts of men. It corresponds to Mara of Buddha.

Purgatory is a place of finely-graded temporary torments. Here man is punished for his evil thoughts and wicked actions. This is a place or state in which souls after death purified from venial sins.

*Feast of the Pass Over* is the same as the Lord's Supper. It was given just before the crucifixion.

### Jesus' Qualities

Jesus was a holy man. He was a God-man, the Incarnation of God. Jesus called himself the Son of God.

In Jesus we see perfect holiness, goodness, kindness, mercy, gentleness and justice. He said "I am the Truth, the Way and the Life." He is the embodiment of all that is best, sublimest and most beautiful. He is the most perfect type and ideal of humanity. He is the embodiment of all his teachings. He is a philosopher, prophet, teacher, reformer. He always practised what he taught.

Jesus was truthful His thoughts were very pure There was no hypocrisy or deception in his thoughts He risked his own life in uttering the truth The spirit of Jesus is the spirit of truth He is called the Sun of Righteousness He went about doing good

The words of Jesus still elevate people They still live as a fountain of inspiration

Christ took the sins of humanity on himself suffered for their sins and made them free This is the theory of Atonement of Christ

He tried to establish on earth the Kingdom of Heaven by making people love one another and act in accordance with the will of the Divine Father

Jesus had a very tender heart He fed the starving people of the desert He resuscitated the young son of a widow to life

He stilled a raging storm when he was crossing the lake of Galilee with his disciples in a small boat He walked on the sea to them when they were in danger His miracles of healing were all acts of mercy He healed countless lepers and restored eyes to innumerable blind people He fed five thousand people with five loaves and two fishes

Lord Jesus washed the feet of the Apostles on the occasion of his last supper with them Mark how humble Jesus was! He was an embodiment of humility

#### His Disciples

Lord Jesus had twelve disciples or Apostles Peter James and John were the most intimate of Jesus' disciples They were all from the ranks common people the fisher folk and other working men of Galilee Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus Most of Lord Jesus' teachings were originally imparted to them and handed down by them

He sent his disciples on a preaching mission They were sent out two by two to roam about the towns and villages of Galilee without provisions for the journey, but they could accept whatever hospitality they were offered They were instructed to go to the Jews and give them the message

The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand

#### Christianity

Christianity derives its name from Christ Christianity speaks of a Personal God There is not much of intricate philosophy or Yoga Sadhana in Christianity There is reason for this Jesus had to deal with the illiterate fishermen of Galilee He gave them only moral precepts and showed them the way of righteous living

Christianity is based chiefly on Judaism and partly on Buddhism The doctrines of the Christian religion are all taken from Judaism Jesus never professed to abolish Judaism and to set up a new religion of his own He says Think not I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets I am not come to destroy but to fulfil For verily I say unto you Till heaven and earth pass one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law till all be fulfilled Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments and shall teach men on he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven but whosoever shall do and teach them the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven

Christian faith sprung from the wisdom of India overspread on to the old trunk of Judaism Buddhism prevailed in Palestine when Christ was born Christ himself came in contact with it through John the Baptist There is a striking resemblance between Buddhism and Christianity in their precepts in their forms and ceremonies in the architectural style of their temples and even in the accounts of the lives of their founders

The dogmas or metaphysical doctrines of Christianity are the same as those of Judaism but its moral precepts are much higher and nobler than those of the Jewish prophets. Christianity owes to Buddhism that higher morality which distinguishes it from Judaism. The moral precepts and teachings of Buddhism have much in common with those of Christianity. Christ himself taught no dogmas.

The teaching of Jesus which is chiefly ethical is embodied in the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord's Prayer, and certain parables known as the parables of the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son and the Sheep and the Goats.

#### Philosophy and Teachings

Nearly two thousand years have passed since Lord Jesus, the Prophet of Palestine, taught the way, the truth and the life to mankind. The words of Jesus were not collected till some generations after they were uttered. Christianity was essentially a radiant way of life, a way of happy and victorious living in this world.

There is no record of the life of Jesus until he was fully grown up. He astonished people by his insight when discussing religion with the religious leaders of his day. For three years he explained his claim as the "Only Son of God" and taught people about the nature of his "Father," God, and the true paths of human life in the shape of Sermon on the Mount, etc. Jesus Christ has been called "The Great Exemplar." He explained the real nature of God, man and the world he lived in. He taught people to change their way of looking at things. He told them that if they would change their outlook on life from its materialistic to its spiritualistic aspect, they would realize that the world they were living in was God's Kingdom.

He has left no written records of his important teachings. He delivered all his

teachings orally. Neither he, nor his followers, ever wrote down even a single word which was spoken by him, in his life-time.

His words have been misunderstood, wrongly snooted, misinterpreted, deformed and transformed and yet they have survived almost two thousand years as they were very powerful and came from the heart of a realized Yogi.

Here is the gist of Jesus' teachings: God is Spirit. He is Omnipresent. He loves His creatures with infinite love. He is the Father of all. God is immanent in the world. He is transcendental also. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, unto the world to show all the way to attain immortality.

The theological doctrine of Jesus is belief in the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. In Godhood there are three Persons, viz., Father, Son and the Holy Ghost or Spirit. This is the Trinity of Christianity.

All men are brothers, because they are all members of the family of God. If the teaching of Christ is carried on there will be no war.

#### Sermon on the Mount

Here is his "Sermon on the Mount."

Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the sons of God.

Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is

The Kingdom of Heaven Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in Heaven, for so were persecuted they the prophets which were before you

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old, thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the Judgment But I say unto you that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger in the Judgment, and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the Council, but whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire Therefore, if thou bringest the gift to the altar, and there remembersel that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way, for thou canst not be reconciled in thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him, lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and then he cast into prison Verily, I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing

#### Self-Discipline

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old, thou shalt not commit adultery But I say unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee, for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body be cast into hell And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee, for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell It hath been

said, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorce" But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery, and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery

Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old thou shalt not swear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths, but I say unto you swear not at all, neither by heaven, for it is God's throne, nor by the earth, for it is his footstool, neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king Neither shall thou swear by the head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black But let your communication be Yes, yes, Nay, nay, for whatsoever is more than these commeth of evil

#### Power of Love

Ye have heard that it hath been said, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, but I say unto you that ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would harrass thee turn not thou away"

Ye have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy But I say unto you love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye

salute your brother only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so? Be ye, therefore, perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

He rebuked the Pharisees or the priests of the Jews; He said "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye are like unto white sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward but are within full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness." He drove out those that had turned the Temple into a house of trade and money-making.

#### Refuge of the Forlorn

A woman was charged of adultery. The Pharisees wanted Jesus to pronounce the Moses verdict of stoning her unto death. What did Lord Jesus say? "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone on her." No one came forward to stone her. Jesus said to the women "I do not condemn you. Go thy way; from henceforth sin no more." Such is the large heart of Lord Jesus.

Jesus welcomed all, even worst sinners, on the simple condition of a change of heart. He said to the Pharisees "Truly I tell you the publicans and the harlots shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven before you." He said to the despised and the rejected, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden and I will give you rest."

Contrition, change of heart, was the only condition in Jesus' teaching for God's forgiveness of human sin. He said "God is merciful. There is the absolute need for repentance or a change of heart for entry into the Kingdom of God."

Lord Jesus spoke of the Judgment of Hell. He told the Jews that after the life on earth, there is hell for sinners. The unrighteous shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into everlasting life. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter but within you are full of ravening wickedness.

Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, theft, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man. "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye."

Inward purity, meekness, forgiveness, returning good for evil—these are the distinctive features of Christianity.

Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Jesus laid great stress on love of God, love of fellowmen and of Law. Faith in God is the central teaching of Jesus. He said: Love of God must manifest itself in love to man.

The Lord, our God, is one Lord. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy soul and all thy mind and all thy strength. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his soul or what shall a man give in exchange of his soul? Unless you become as little children, you shall not enter the Kingdom of God.

Lord Jesus wanted every Christian to pray

### Lord's Prayer

"Our Father which art in heaven,  
Hallowed be Thy Name  
Thy Kingdom come  
Thy Will be done as in heaven, on on earth  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors,

And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one"

This is a very beautiful prayer. If the Christians put the prayer into action, the Kingdom of God would have come on this earth long ago. There would not have been the two Great Wars.

May Lord Jesus the Son of God, the Prophet of Nazareth, the Babe of Bethlehem, grant you all every joy, and consolation that you need! May his blessings be upon you all!

## Words of Wisdom

1 He who looks at a woman with a lustful eye has committed adultery with her already in his heart

2 I am the way, and the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father, but by me

3 The voice of the people is the voice of God

4 Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak

5 Whosoever s a man soweth that shall he also reap

6 Sin no more

7 One sin begat another

8 Charity covereth a multitude of sins let not thy right hand know what the left hand giveth

9 The measure of our sacrifice is the measure of our love

10 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled

11 How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God

12 When thou prayest thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are for they love to stand in the synagogues and in the

corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. But thou when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly

13 Good deeds are the best prayer

14 Your Father knoweth what things ye shall need before ye ask Him

15 The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds poised

16 Then shalt love thy neighbour as thyself

17 Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof

18 The love of money is the root of all evils

19 Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile go with him twain

20 Better is one ounce of mercy than a pound of gold to the Church

21 No man can serve two masters for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon

22 He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love

23. He who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God loves his brother also.

24. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God and God in him.

25. For in Him (God) we live, and move and have our being; for we are also His offspring.

26. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall leave it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or

what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

27. Fear little, but do not fear death.

28. Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

29. Behold! The Kingdom of God is within you.

30. Know yourself, afterwards know your fellow-men.

31. Heaven and hell is in your heart.

32. Stronger even than sin is the heart of worldly man.

33. A good conscience is God's voice.

## In the Footsteps of Jesus Christ

Rev. Thomas Kempis

Vainly of vanities, all is vanity, except to love God and to serve Him only.

Happy is he whom truth by himself doth teach, not by figures and words that pass away, but as it is in itself.

He to whom all things are one, he who reduceth all things to one and seeth all things in one, may enjoy a quiet mind and remain peaceable in God.

All perfection in this life hath some imperfection mixed with it, and no knowledge of ours is without some darkness. An humble knowledge of thyself is a surer way to God than a deep search after learning.

Esteem not thyself better than others, lest perhaps in the sight of God, who knoweth what is in man, thou be accounted worse than they. If there be any good in thee, believe that there is much more in others, that so thou mayest serve humility within thee.

My son, thou canst not possess perfect liberty unless thou wholly renounceth thyself.

We must have charity towards all, but familiarity with all is not expedient.

So long as we live in this world we cannot be without tribulation and temptation. Everyone therefore ought to be careful about his temptations, and to watch in prayer, lest the devil find an advantage to deceive him.

Daily ought we to renew our purposes, and to stir up ourselves to greater fervour, as though this were the first day of our conversion, and to say—

'Help me, my God, in this my good purpose, and in Thy holy service, and grant that I may now this day begin perfectly, for that which I have done hitherto is as nothing.'

The Kingdom of God is within you. Turn thee with thy whole heart unto the Lord, and forsake this wretched world, and thy soul shall find rest.

Regard not much who is for thee, or against thee, but think what thou art about, and take care that God may be with thee.

"stil thou doest

Have a good conscience, and God will well defend thee.

Speak, O Lord Ilem Thy servant, grant me understanding that I may know Thy testimonies.

Thy Grace is the mistress of truth, the teacher of discipline, the light of the heart, the solace of affliction, the dispeller of sorrow, the expeller of fear, the nurse of devotion, the source and fountain of

tears

To Thee, therefore, do I lift up mine eyes, in Thee my God Father of mercies, do I put my trust. Bless and sanctify my soul with Thy heavenly blessings that it may become Thy holy habitation and the seat of Thine eternal glory, and let nothing be found in this temple of Thy Divinity, which shall offend the eyes Thy Majesty.

{From The Imitation of Christ}

## Characteristics of the Teachings of Jesus Christ

Sri Swami Krishnananda

(Pro Vice Chancellor Yoga Vedanta Forest University),

### Introductory

Godmen appear on earth when the forces governing life take a course counter to the law of the integrity of the universe and the supremacy of the Divine Spirit. The power of the unity of life exerted by these noble souls influences the course of the lives of those around them. This influence may be felt consciously or received unconsciously, but this immanent presence and active operation is one of the grandest phenomena of existence known to those who are alive to the glow of the spiritual light. Jesus Christ's incarnation is one such lofty instance of the descent of Divine Power for the overcoming of error on earth and the establishment of the law of Truth. The people in reform whom Jesus appeared on earth were ridden over by false beliefs, empty rituals and hypocritical practices in the name of religion. He came to make known the doctrine which is His that sent him, the law of God who rules the universe from inside and outside.

The doctrine of Christ is the system of the Supreme Consciousness, which is the highest Reality, and it implies the relative laws of what are termed here forms of

righteousness. That is said to be righteous which tends to the conscious recognition of the Eternal Divine Presence. Hence righteousness consists more in spirit than in letter, in inward feeling than outward form in psychological and spiritual attitude rather than ritualistic and traditional routine. And Christ came to bear witness to this righteousness underlying the law of the Truth. In essence this righteousness consists in renunciation of appearances and affirmation of Reality. And all the stages that lead to this righteousness also are righteousness. The whole of Christ's teachings abounds in this twofold revelation of the meaning of life. In the terminology of the system of Indian Yoga these constitute Vairagya and Abhyasa. In fact all saints have said only this, that phenomena have to be renounced, that the Imperishable Spirit should be contemplated upon and realized. Christ gives expression to these truths in various ways in his life and in his precepts.

### Suffering and Tolerance

What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? And yet this is what most men of the world

do not care to think. Search for outward things in which man seems to be continuously engrossed is really the denial of the independence and dignity of the Self, and the assertion of the unreal tantalizing presentations to the senses. It is the teaching of Christ that man shall not live by bread alone, but by the Spirit within. But adherence to the righteousness of the Spirit means self-abnegation, an abandonment of the external temptations. Not only this; it implies the possession of a power of enduring all persecutions from the opposing forces of the lower nature.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." He that gains blessedness in the realm of Spirit, casts aside the corresponding negativity in the region of darkness. Suffering in this world is the price to be paid for the supreme fulfilment in the Consciousness of the Divine. Suffering cannot be avoided for man as long as he is an element of the relative universe. And this suffering should be accompanied by great tolerance; even positive evil should not evoke our propensity to retaliation. "Resist not evil" is a shining gem adorning the garland of the teachings of Christ. Perhaps it sums up the major teaching concerning spiritual life, that evil is the product of erroneous perception and that correct vision of things affirms the absolute nature of the pure Spirit.

All resistance is an affirmation of ego, however much it may be justified by false logic and prejudiced understanding. It may be that some forms of egotism are considered harmless in that they are supposed to tend to or even express righteousness, and sometimes indispensable.

bles. Yes, it is so as an apology for true righteousness; but it does not require much thinking to discover that it is a association to the weaker side of human nature and that the greatest heroism of spirit is manifest in unlimited tolerance. No retaliation can equal in its effects the majesty of endurance *par excellence*. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you;" "for if ye love them which love you what reward have ye?" "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which art in heaven is perfect."

#### Love, Service and Dependence on God

It is not only tolerance and non-retaliation that are required of us but positive love towards all. This love is expressed both in mind and body. A feeling of love for all, based on the omnipresence and supremacy of God, characterizes the psychic being. And in external life, love takes the form of service. Service should be done not to win the gratitude of the person served or to enjoy the goodwill and praise of the public but to purify the lower nature and fulfill the law of God. Hence Christ says:—"Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them..... when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth ... and thy Father which seeth in secret, Himself shall reward thee openly."

We do charity not to glory on earth, but to glory in God. If all the earth is lost God he is little, but in the eyes of God, on the other hand, he is great to gained the all; for the opinion of those on the Universe. And further, a desire to do better in the absolute reality of God and a

faith in the phenomenal universe. It is this false faith in things that perish that constitutes real sin.

Christ warns man not to trust the things of sense and not to bestow thought even on one a creature comforts. The world is sustained by the spirit of God and not by the egoistic efforts of man. Where the so called effort of man seems to bring success, it is to be understood that it is on account of its flowing with the current of the Law of God. And where it fails it is in variance with the Law. Individual effort is the name given to the function of the Universal Force when it passes through the egoism of the individual.

A wise person should put his trust in God and be a silent participant in the fulfilment of the Law. No individual effort has a value independent of the working of the Divine Law. 'Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life. Is not life more than meat and the body than raiment? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.' 'Provide neither gold nor silver nor dress in your purse, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes: nor yet staves for the workman is worthy of his meat.'

#### Seek the Eternal

The power the inner strength that is required to overcome the temptation to yield the urge to seek pleasure in external things is to be acquired from the Eternal Foot of God. One has only to seek it sincerely and one shall have it. Intense aspiration for the

realization of the Eternal Spirit is like a fire which shall burn up all extraneous thoughts and lift the aspirant above the mire of sense experience. The fault lies in man who does not sincerely seek it, for he seems to be satisfied with the constricted vision and the painful life to which he is tethered by ignorance of higher truths and values. A surrender of personality engendered by deep devotion to the Eternal shall pull out the bolt of the ego closing the door of the heart, and let in the flood of the blissful consciousness of perfection and power from above. But, for this, the condition is seeking—aspiring "Ask and it shall be given to you, knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

#### The Strait Gate

Christ calls the path of God 'the strait gate'. The way to the knowledge and experience of God is distressful, abounding in difficulties. One may say that it is even painful, distasteful and to some, fearful. Many turn away from it, after making the preliminary attempts to tread it. Fear, disgust, doubt and despair debar the aspirants from entering the strait gate. Indian teachers call this 'the pathless path,' 'the bird's path,' the path of the fish,' etc., meaning that the way to God is mysterious, hard to understand and untraceable like the path of birds in the air or of aquatic animals in water. They call it 'the pathless path' because it is not a path but a state of consciousness—it is not accurate in space, which is the accepted meaning of path, but an internal transfiguration of one a entire being.

'Enter ye in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction and many there be which go in thereto. Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.' It is easy to flow with the current of a river

but hard to swim against it. To carry out the commands of the lower instincts is pleasant, for man generally lives in agreement with them, but to conquer them and listen to the silent voice of the Spirit is a task demanding extraordinary courage and understanding.

It is quite likely that the aspirant may experience at a certain stage of his spiritual practices a natural desertion of himself by other persons and things. This is not experienced at all times, but only in a particular situation in which the seeker finds himself while searching for Reality. While the earth is cut from under the feet, and the heavens have not yet lent enough support, the seeker finds himself in a peculiar predicament where consciousness of the pain of one's separation from objects of individual satisfaction supervenes.

At this stage the Light of God appears to be eclipsed and the natural forces are at war with the seeker. There is an apparent suppression of Truth by the undivine forces before it finally overthrows them and reveals itself in glorious triumph. Christ, in his life of suffering symbolizes this position of the aspiring soul and says "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests but the son of man hath not where to lay his head." When God's grace descends on man, he is first stripped of all his possessions and cut off from the centres of his enjoyment. Christ demonstrates this to mankind in his life of 'symbolic suffering.'

#### Self-Surrender

The grandest peak of his teaching is the gospel of self-surrender: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me, for whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." The process of spiritual attainment is one of 'dying to live.' The

complete negation of personality is the same as the attainment of the Impersonal Absolute. The cross of relative suffering and pain everyone has to take up, for the sake of the supreme peace that passes all understanding.

Love of life is the strong iron chain binding the soul to bodily life and misery, by which it loses the real life which is of the Higher Spirit. But he who aspires for the Supreme Blessedness of the Spirit shall have to cast aside the life of the flesh here on earth and surrender himself to the Supreme. Surrender is the fruit of faith. Faith can work wonders. "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain 'Remove hence to yonder place,' and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible unto you."

Much discussion has been carried on in regard to the relation between self-effort and predestination. But Christ declares emphatically that nothing can happen without the will of God. And so even the so-called self-effort should form part of the Will of God. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore ye are of more value than many sparrows." Man to hound not because he puts forth effort in some direction, but because he thinks and also feels that it is his separated individuality that exercises the effort, not knowing that he cannot lift a straw without the Divine Will. The moment effort is realized to be a single phase of the Spirit, effort becomes not a force directed to any individualized end but a cosmic movement, a process of the universe within itself in relation to the whole of itself, and not merely to one of its parts. In the consciousness of this universal nature of all actions and thoughts does consist the

liberation of the individual.

Christ gives the assurance that those who go to him for help shall find it abundantly. Only, they have to bear his yoke "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." How humble and simple is the supreme master of all the worlds! Yes, his burden is light, but men find it heavier than an iron hill. His yoke is easy, but difficult as baling the ocean with a blade of grass. But it is certain that those who have enough guts can attain through him the rest which he promises to give them. Sri Krishna has already given the same promise "Abandoning all other duties, come to Me alone as refuge. I shall liberate thee from all sins, grieve not."

The assurance is highly consoling and soothsaying, but the yoke is hard to take up. This is the tragedy of the life of man, and also his glory. Wherever he turns, man finds himself caught into a vicious circle. This is because he has not learnt to think properly. And once he knows how to think, he is in the empyrean of the felicity of freedom. When he learns to think he becomes humble and regains the purity and simplicity of the child. "Transcending learning, one should become a child," says the Upanishad. And Christ says, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." These are the saintly men, who in his words are those which have made themselves "eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake." They are neither men nor women, but really humans, who have "forsoaken" everything for his sake, to receive a "hundred-fold," and "inherit everlasting life."

#### Relation to God and Man

"Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." A natural corollary of this commandment is that "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Because thy neighbour is really thyself in the One God. Here is summed up the spiritual and the social ethics for man. God is one and since all are in the Being of God, each bears to the others relation of brotherhood and an intimate kinship of the nature of identity. In the world of social relations this identity is relative and secondary in God it is absolute and primary. The whole life of man is to be dedicated for the purpose of recognizing and experiencing this identity of Self.

No doubt it is hard even to attempt it. "The spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak." But "I am with you always even unto the end of the world." And so there is no fear. The temptations shall be overcome by the power of the eternal presence of Christ with us. He and his Father are one. And we are his. He is our way and the light and the life and the love and by renegating ourselves, we shall offer ourselves to him. When he is pleased God is pleased, and when God is pleased we get installed in the Kingdom of Heaven which is within us. This is immortal life.

#### Conclusion

The teachings of Jesus offer solutions to all problems of life. Metaphysical, ethical, social and individual relations, communal, national good, and all the values of life, are finally centred in the nature of God consciousness. Everything should be judged from the stand-point of this consciousness only then will the true worth of a thing be known. But other forms of judgment arise from mistake and lead to mistake. Judge not, that ye be not judged. For, in the manner in which we

behave towards things shall they end shall God's Law behave with us. "All things whatsoever ye wouldest men shouldest do to you, do you even so to them, for this is the law of the prophets" The incarnation of Christ have its mission in revealing to the world the greatness of God the glory of Truth, the worthlessness of things mundane which are estranged from God who is Truth, the necessity of surrender, and the importance of renunciation and fortitude.

Those who have these virtues are truly Christians, sons of God the beloved of the Son of Man They shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven who are united with Hm in

spirit and "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" He does the Will of the One Father who loves all as his own self who serves all as variegated manifestations of the One, who hates none, wants nothing, gives whatever he has and loses himself in contemplation of the Eternal—for this he knows is his supreme duty here All is his who has God with him, who is in God and no thought need enter his mind His is the blessed life the Divine Life, and he has come to raise humanity to this state of Divinity, through his thoughts words and actions

## The Christ-Life Must Be Lived

Sri Swami Sivananda

Jesus Christ lived and symbolized divine consciousness He was the very personification of divinity He was born at a time when ignorance, superstition, creed, hatred and hypocrisy prevailed upon Judea, as elsewhere The rulers were arrogant and unrighteous The people were avaricious, indolent and headless Purity was forgotten Morality was neglected They were more intent upon worshipping Mammon than adoring God There was no idealism

In the midst of these conditions, Christ was born and he worked a transformation in the lives of the people, though not quite successfully in his tile time but through the following centuries by means of his teachings He gave a new spiritual turn to the lives of his fellowmen Thus a new era dawned upon this world and the teaching of Jesus spread far and wide

Before discrimination and spiritual awakening dawn within the seeker, he has a bigoted outlook, selfish tendencies and no

thought for God or the higher divine life Immersed in the pursuit of material interests he is a slave of his senses He has no spiritual ideal in life His desires, hidden Arrogance, avarice and sensuality characterize his personality He lives a life of lust, anger, greed, deluded attachment, pride, egoism and jealousy

If this state of things must cease and the seeker must enter into a new life of spiritual aspiration purity and devotion, then the Christ-Spirit must take its birth within one's heart That will be the real adoration of Jesus Christ That will be the true following of Christianity When the divine element that is dormant within us begins to express itself, then indeed we open ourselves to the grace of the Christ From then onward light begins to shine where darkness was before Ignorance gives place to the beginning of wisdom. Impurity is replaced by purity. Hatred ceases and love begins to blossom forth

In his innermost core, man is essen-

tially divine. But through the medium of the human personality, two forces keep acting. They are the forces of good and evil, light and darkness. The divine and undivine both operate in the human consciousness. To completely overcome and eradicate the undivine elements and to fully manifest the supreme divine Consciousness in all its radiant light and glory is to be achieved through the living of the Christ-Life in the utmost faithful detail. That is spiritual life. That is Yoga. That is Sadhana. That is the path of Self-realization.

If the Christ-life is to be lived, first of all the child Christ has to be born in our heart. Only then, does the real spiritual life commence for the aspirant. The first manifestation of the divine urge to progress in the path of goodness and virtue and to cherish noble ideals and eradicate vicious, negative tendencies signify the birth of the infant Jesus in our consciousness. From hence starts the living of the Christ-life in all its details of sublime purity, faith in divinity, mercy, compassion, love, selflessness, desirelessness, egolessness, forgiveness, prayerfulness, and so on. Hence starts the life of earnest Yoga, of self-restraint and simplicity, of unbroken serenity and peace, tolerance, balance of mind in pleasure and pain, unflinching courage and determination, and perfect dedication to the worship of God through the service of humanity. This is the spiritual implication of all the celebrations connected with Jesus Christ. This is also the message of the Easter.

With the advent of this Christ spirit within the heart of a truly earnest seeker, all mundane desires come to an end. There is a cessation of all vicious tendencies in him. He begins to influence others around him. The Spirit of Jesus Christ emanates from him. Many are made aware of that

spirit and a great deal of good is brought into their lives. Thus, if every individual begins to live a new life of divine aspiration, fellow-feeling and social service, spirituality will gradually overcome materialism. There will be more of good-will, more of harmony and more of peace in this world. The tendency to help each other, to understand each other and to decrease egotism, selfishness and egoism will grow gradually in every sphere which would mean a greater happiness in every hearth and home.

Spiritual life is neither exclusively meant for the poor and the lowly nor is it beyond the reach of the wealthy. To pursue the spiritual path one need not seek the undisturbed assurity of food and shelter. But there is a significant point in the birth of Jesus. He was born in a simple, lowly place - a corner of a stable. Also he was born in darkness in the obscure hour of midnight when no one even knew about it except a few blessed souls. The significance here is that spiritual awakening comes to the seeker who is humble and meek and simple. The light of divine consciousness dawns only when the delusive glitters of material glamour and the corruptive influence of wealth are absent.

The quality of true humility is one of the indispensable fundamentals. Only when there are simplicity, holiness and renunciation of all earthly desires and the pride of learning goodness and merit the divine light manifests within. Even as Christ was born unknown to the world and in the obscurity of darkness, so also the advent of the Christ spirit takes place in the inwardness of the soul when there is total self-effacement and self-abnegation. Where the urge of aggrandisement and vanity abides, there divinity cannot abide itself, for these expressions of

egnism are permanent hindrances to any kind of spiritual growth. You can be sure, a man of vanity is far from God. A man of selfishness knows nothing of God. A man of intolerance has thoroughly misunderstood God. 'Empty thyself and I shall fill thee,' is the advice of Jesus. The kingdom of heaven is surely for the humble in spirit.

It was this secret that centuries ago Jesus explained to Nicodemus. The good man did not quite understand what precisely Jesus meant. 'How can it be? How can I be born again if I am to attain the Kingdom of God?' Asked Nicodemus. Then Christ explained that this birth was an inward transformation, not of the body, but of the spirit. Such inner spiritual birth is essential if one truly wishes to know

Jesus Christ.

Mey the true implication of the Christ-life dawn within every heart. Realize fully as long as thirst of power and arrogance or wealth infect the nature of man, until then the spirit of Christ is out of reach. As with the individual, even so with the community and the nation. It is only when real spiritual transformation occurs in the hearts of the individuals that the effects can be felt in the nations of the world. Let every soul understand the duty of the human life. Let everyone cultivate a sense of brotherhood, tolerance, charity, humility, mutual understanding, love and compassion. Let everyone aspire for greater knowledge, greater enlightenment and greater good-will. Let the sense of evolution and perfection be eternally progressive.

## Christ Pattern of Life's Perfection

Sri Swami Chidananda

[Vice-Chancellor Yogs-Vedanta Forest University]

Adorations and worshipful homage at the sacred feet of Jesus Divinity incarnate upon earth to show to man the way to Eternal Peace and Spiritual Perfection. Prostrations again and again to the Lord, the Christ, who showed the way to live the Divine Life of love, purity, godliness and divine consciousness. All hail to the eternal Light of Atman, the Supreme Reality, that abhore in this world as the Prophet of Nazareth and the Saviour of sinners. May that Great Light shine again in the inner shrine of everyman's heart and may it illuminate the entire world with the radiance of peace, love and universal goodwill.

This world is the house of God. All men are verily His children and are brothers in the spirit of God. Humanity is one divine family. The One Almighty Lord known to man variously as Allah, Ahura

Mazda, the Father in Heaven, Atman or Paramatman, or the Supreme Tao, call Him by what name you will, is the Eternal Parent of us all. He is our original abode, the source of our being, our sole support and centre, and the ultimate goal and destination of our life. His is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus had come into this world of men to show unto us the inner way to the spiritual Kingdom of God. The true worth and the glory of human life is in the attainment of this inner Kingdom of the Spirit. In the measure that you draw near to this ideal to that measure will peace, joy, strength, courage, success, true and lasting bliss come to prevail in your life. For the Kingdom of Heaven is verily the Kingdom of Bliss and of a Peace that passeth all understanding. Christ lives eternally in

that Kingdom, aye, he is indeed the Kingdom. He would have you too live in the bliss and light of the heavenly kingdom, hence his Call to you saying "Come unto Me". Hearken O man to this loving voice and draw near to him, the compassionate filled Christ, the beloved, the adorable, the worshipful, the Divine!

The world is in greater need of Christ now than it ever was before since the time when Divinity in the guise of the gentle, holy Nazarene walked the shores of Galilee. In the Gospel of Jesus verily lies the hope of man now heading towards wholesale destruction designed by his own blindness, faithlessness and folly. Jesus' eternal cry, "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy-laden" has fallen upon fully deaf ears, and instead of going to the open arms of the Lord man is moving into the gaping jaws of Mammon. Yet he wonders why he does not obtain lasting happiness and satisfaction and peace! This is itself the real wonder, that you sow thistles and would reap figs out of it.

Two thousand years ago when Christ called upon man to follow him, so that he may lead them on to true happiness and eternal life the blind and ignorant peoples of that time persecuted him. They denied him, betrayed him and crucified him. O Man would you too enact the same tragic and bitter drama all over again this present day? O Friends beware! for by your heedlessness and wanton evil you are verily preparing to crucify the spirit of the very Christ within you all. If Jesus was denied but thrice then in the past, you are now denying him many times over again repeatedly by your unrighteous thoughts, words and deeds, individually as well as collectively. Let not the spirit of Jesus stand betrayed at the hands of modern man. By persisting in a life of greed, hatred violence and

welfare humanity is once again taking the Christ apart from its life towards the tragic mount of Calvary. Wake up! O Man! and arise hence from this heedlessness and wantonness. Follow the Lord. Imitate Christ. Strive to build up your life upon the Christ pattern of perfection. Herein lies your true and lasting welfare.

Like the shepherd after his lost sheep does the loving Lord seek time and again through the blessed saints and godmen to bring you back into the Divine fold. The same Divine call comes again to you through today's great spiritual masters like Swami Sivananda and others saying - "Follow me. Come unto me. Lead the Divine Life. Become blessed." Beloved Friends arise and follow. Embrace the gospel of goodness. Be selfless. Love all. Serve all. Be kind to all. Exercise compassion. Purify your heart and mind. Cultivate faith and charity. Do good. Pray and worship the Lord. Meditate upon Him. Live in the constant remembrance of His eternal all-pervading Presence.

Grow into the Christ-pattern of perfection. Strive manfully. Do Sadhana ceaselessly. Overcome all obstacles with courage. Cast out the dross of selfishness, impurity, greed, hatred and anger from within. Clear the temple of your heart of all ungodly desires and instincts. Let the voice of the humble saint Sivananda the true lover of Christ, inspire you to turn away from Mammon and move towards God. Hearken to his Call to Divine Life. Be not content merely to say, "Lord, Lord," but earnestly seek to do His Will. Thyself live and likewise inspire all to live in the true spirit of the Greatest Commandment of all viz., thou shalt love thy Lord, God, with all thy heart with all thy soul with all thy mind and with all thy strength and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Think of the ideal of Jesus. Reflect over again upon his supreme Gospel embodied in the Sermon on the Mount. Meditate deeply on the life of Christ. mould your entire being gradually upon the pattern of his perfect life. Your life will indeed

blossom forth into perfection. May the Spirit of the eternal Christ be enshrined within you, give you strength to follow in his footsteps and illumine your path towards everlasting Spiritual Perfection. Hail Jesus, the Light of the World!

## The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ

Sri Swami Sadananda

[Professor of Raja Yoga at the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University]

How happy we feel when we read in the second chapter of St. Luke, the words : "And the angel said unto them : Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a saviour, which is Christ the Lord?" As we proceed further and read about how Jesus performed miracles for the sake of the blind the lame the deaf and the needy, we rejoice at the love that radiated from him and expect that such love would be returned to him with added force. Yet, what do we find? He is cruelly crucified. The Scripture says in several places that this happened because old prophecies had to be fulfilled. From such statements our mind does not get any satisfaction. We are anxious to know the reason. Jewish history will furnish us with political and social reasons. But I believe that there must also be a divine reason. Let us examine both.

From the last book of the Old Testament—Malachi—written in 397 B.C., we learn that the people of Jerusalem were given a promise of the appearance of the Messiah—promise which they long cherished in their memory. Yet, when the Messiah came in the form of Jesus Christ, he was not recognized as such. That was because the four centuries that preceded the arrival of Jesus were centuries of mo-

mentous happenings which changed political, social and religious conditions. Cyrus who mounted the throne of Persia in 536 B.C., enabled the Jews, who had been subjugated by Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon in 607 B.C. to come back and build their temple in Jerusalem. The foundations were laid even as early as 535 B.C., but the work could be finished only in 445 B.C. After that, Jerusalem became a small colony enjoying self-government preserving its freedom in the midst of hostile forces only through faith and piety. The Jews were specially careful in the observance of religious rites and ceremonies because they feared that they might otherwise lose the favour of God. Naturally they developed an unhealthy exclusiveness of spirit.

After Persia was conquered by Alexander, a conflict began between the Hebrews and the Greeks. Alexander died in 323 B.C., but almost immediately afterwards began the warfare between the Ptolemies of Egypt and the Seleucids of Syria which lasted for a century. These were disturbing times for the Jews whose position became really worse after 175 B.C., when Antiochus Epiphanes, the King of Syria, subjugated Palestine and installed the Greek God Zeus in the temple of Jerusalem and even ordered that swine should be offered for sacrifice. It was then that the high priest

Mathathias evidenced unparalleled heroism by waging a stubborn war with the Syrian forces and defeated them many times. When he was also in 161 B.C., there arose a new hero, Jonathan, the youngest of the Maccabean brothers who gained victories and ensured prosperity for Jerusalem.

For two generations, the Jews felt that they had realized all their ambitions. But in the third generation, the high priest Alexander Janneus brought ill fame by his dissoluteness. When he died in 73 B.C., civil war broke out between the supporters of Hyrcanus and Aristobulus the two sons of Jannaeus. The time was most opportune for the arrival of the Roman General Pompey the Great who captured the city and placed the weakling Hyrcanus as the high priest. But he was only a puppet to the hands of Antipater, the father of Herod the Great. From then, all godliness was lost and Jerusalem came to be divided between the followers of the aristocratic Sadducees and the supporters of the Pharisees whose religion was only a matter of forms and ceremonies. While the Sadducees exalted the Torah or the written Law of Moses denying the authority of all subsequent revelation or tradition, the Pharisees were very scrupulous about the observance of the Sabbath laws, journeying, sacrifices etc. Although both the Sadducees and the Pharisees were anxious that the Messiah should appear before them, so that they might get freed from the Roman yoke, they were very much dislocated when they saw that Jesus was not adhering strictly to the laws of Moses and was disrespectful of the Sabbath and also of the rules about eating. They wanted the Messiah in the form of a military chief, and when they found Jesus was very different from their own ideal of a Messiah, they not only discarded him, but also

treated him as an enemy. They could not tolerate the idea that their narrow faith should be questioned. They felt that the Devil was speaking through Jesus and so demanded his crucifixion.

If we now pass on to examine the divine cause for Christ's crucifixion, we shall see that God wanted that people who lived in those days should be taught the great truth that life is eternal and that it does not perish when the body perishes. These words spoke Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy son that Thy son may also glorify Thee. As Thou hast given him power over all flesh he should give eternal life to as many as Thou has given him. And this is life eternal, that they may know Thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (John, XVII, 1 to 3). The whole chapter proceeds to the same strain. Here we have the clue which helps us to find out why God allowed the crucifixion to take place. If He liked, He could have avoided it. Jesus himself knew that he could save his body by praying to God. He asks, "Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to my Father and He shall presently, give me more than twelve legions of angels" (Matthew, XXVI 53). But if Jesus was not crucified, there was no way of teaching the people of those days that death can take away only the body and not the soul.

After the crucifixion, Jesus was buried and though a special watch was set by the chief priest and Pharisees, Jesus carried out the promise he had made, by rising from the dead. This was the only way in which they could realize that life is eternal. Even after Jesus had risen from the dead and shown himself to his disciples Thomas did not believe that it was really Jesus. He said, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and

we have received Him

When we have got our relationship right with God in love, joy and peace, we must get it right with our brother-men, in long suffering, kindness and goodness. The hardest of the three is put first. Many persons and many things hurt us, and tempt us to bitterness. But this wonderful gift of the Holy Spirit comes to give us patience. It may be long suffering in sickness and pain patiently and joyfully borne. It may be courage in difficulties and adversities. Whatever the suffering, we have got the remedy in this wonderful gift of the Holy Spirit. Long suffering enables us to bear the wounds inflicted on us by our fellow-men. Bitter remarks, unkind words and deeds, the spreading of false stories all hurt us. But Christ dwells in us as Incarnate Long Suffering. How patient He was as He stood up against the calumnies and hostility of men! How patient He was with His wayward disciples!

I had an interesting experience when I was in the Dublin University Brotherhood in Chota Nagpur. I had been in the mission six years. The Brotherhood decided that it should take up work at Ranchi, nearly 60 miles away. I was one of the two chosen.

seen to go there. I did not want to go at all. I loved my school-work and the boarding house at Hazaribagh.

But the Brotherhood decided I was to go and the year I spent there was the most unhappy time in my life. I had a good deal of physical suffering. But the chief trial was that the Bishop had a strange idea that the Principal of the school should not have spiritual charge of the boys. All the arrangements for their Sunday worship, and their preparations for confirmation, were to be in the hands of the local pastor. Satan tempted me to impatience. I thought of going away as a Sadhu, thinking I would be doing a fine self-sacrificing act, but really I was desirous to get away from a disagreeable situation. But a retreat was held, and one of the messages was, 'You must remain in a difficult situation until God Himself opens the door and sets you free.' I asked God to give me long-suffering, and became ready to hear my cross as long as it was His will, and only to go away when He opened the door. Two months later a telegram came from London that I should be sent to Trichinopoly College. God had opened the door and I was set free.

## MEDITATION ON JESUS

(Sri Swami Sarananda)

Place a picture of Jesus in front of you. Sit in your favorite meditative posture. Concentrate gently on the picture, with eyes open. Rotate the mind on His long hair, beautiful beard, compassionate eyes, the cross on His chest and other limbs of His body, on the spiritual aura around His head and so on.

Think of His divine attributes such as love, magnanimity, mercy and forbearance. Think of the various phases of His interesting life, the "miracles" He performed and the various extraordinary powers He possessed. Then close your eyes and try to visualize the picture in your mind till it becomes faint. Then open the eyes and repeat the same process again and again till you are able to meditate for long without the aid of the picture.

# Christ is All—in All

Sri J. G. Phelps Stokes  
[New York]

I am sure we are all familiar with those wonderful words of St Paul in his Epistle to the *Corinthians*: "Christ is All—in All." The most recent (Catholic) version of that text (the so-called Knox translation) renders those words: "There is nothing but Christ in any of us"—nothing but Christ and our illusions that of course have no reality! Is it not true that each one of us builds up within himself a veil of illusions so dense that none of us can see the Christ either within himself or within the self of anyone else! How wonderful it would be if each of us could so dissipate those illusions that so veil our minds that we could see the Christ within! And how very wonderful for all the world if all the world could similarly so extirpate its illusions that all could see and become one with that Christ that is "All in All"—if all

the world could so dissipate its illusions that that light could shine forth!"

".....With that Christ that is the all, not merely in those who worship Him by His Greek name as "Christ," but in all, also, who truly worship Him by whatever name. He may be reverently called in any and all the myriad tongues of earth! For just as the moon is the same moon whether called by its English name of 'moon' or by any of its countless other names according to the usages of the world's many and varied races, peoples and tribes—whether in this or in past ages—so also the Christ is the same whether called 'Christos,' or 'Avaiser' or 'Tathsgsta,' or by any of the countless more personal names that have been given His many and successive earthly vehicles since Time began!"

## Christ-Consciousness, OF Cosmic Awareness

Sri Mark Halpern  
[California]

Life is the great enigma that only the intuitive spiritual perception and not the intellect, can penetrate. Ever since we first began to use the mind, we have been trying to probe into the essential meaning of life. Sages have meditated on it. The immortal poets have sung of it in their undying epics. Philosophers have discoursed upon it and written about it, and scientists have analyzed the *how* of it, but are still searching after the *why* of it—that elusive metaphysical *why* that surrenders itself at last only to the transcendent faculty of Absolute Awareness.

In these years as never before, the people are asking themselves, "Is life worth while?" Bewuddled by the critical and complex times, humanity is looking

for a key to the mystery of existence—something that will reveal the significance of life here on earth.

But the Golden Key of Divine Wisdom is never found in the unilluminated mortal mind. We discover it only when our consciousness has risen above the unawakened little 'I-me-mine' self lost in the dark fog of materialistic values—when our consciousness has become fused with the Light of the Soul.

### Oneness of Existence

For it is only through the Light of the Soul that we are able to enter into the illuminating cosmic awareness, not mere intellectual assent or theory, that life is One—and that One is God, or, if you prefer a less anthropomorphic designation,

**The Absolute** Once awakened in the Light of the Soul, we behold the same Light everywhere, in all things, whether animate or inanimate, and instead of separative differences we see the Eternal Oneness and Sameness behind all evolving entities. Then it is that we begin really to understand what we as servants of humanity are expected to contribute towards the fostering of universal goodwill and right human relations. We are expected to contact the Light of the Soul and develop a sustained contact with that Light in illumined consciousness.

It should be evident that world peace and unity will not be built by more sensational invasions or more destructive nuclear bombs, or increasing competition for the accumulation of material possessions. Rather, they will be the result of a general transformation in great numbers of humankind itself—a transformation from the selfishly grasping separative consciousness into a magnanimously sharing and integrating cosmic awareness of the illumined consciousness.

#### Spontaneous Rhythm

In the light of the transformed consciousness, it is realized indeed that we, as human beings are all of the same immortal divine parentage that we are all undying golden flames of the same holy, consuming, life-giving Fire of the One God, the Eternal Incite Absolute. The all pervading awareness of the illumined consciousness reveals that centre and periphery, beginning and ending, big and little, gain and loss, are one. It is a spontaneous rhythm that flows of itself in the effortless effort of a calm waveless infinite ocean of illumined space, though at the same time, centred in a profound, inner, all-enveloping, motionless silence.

#### To Know Is to Become

That state of wondrous healing besti-

tude beyond all relative dualistic thinking, is entered through the Light of the Soul. But if it were to be asked, "How does one enter the Light of the Soul and thus help to illumine the Lighted Way," let us listen for the answer in the words of Jesus Himself who pointed out the way when He spoke to His close disciples not by parable as He taught in public but in the unequivocal, non-compromising words of the Truth embodied in Himself. For He told them of the highest mystery the ineffable, yet the simplest and the clearest of all—His own example, though He is to be known by him alone who utterly renounces the empty materialistic values of the transitory world and this is the knowledge by which men become Christs, "for such man," He said, "are Myself and I am these man," for Christ is that highest mystery, knowing that men are transformed into pure Light and are brought into the Cosmic Light. And to know Christ is to become like Christ—to follow in His footsteps.

But we can never surrender completely the materialistic values of this world so long as there is still the illusory dualism of separateness to our thinking. So strong is the tendency through past mental conditionings, to believe or want to believe that the creed or opinion we hold as our own is differently superior to that of others that even when we no longer see our group or our denomination or race or religion as superior to another there may still be present in the consciousness of even the seekers in both the Orient and the Occident that their beliefs are the only true beliefs. Who is right and who is wrong? Whether the beliefs be Eastern or of Western is not important. What is important is to enter into the direct experience of the one Absolute Reality in the back of all teachings.

#### Love and Goodwill

We of the West must remember that the

meekiod, and also sends forth lovely and fragrant flowers for good measure. The very air we breathe in, gives of itself that we may continue to live.

Yes, it is more blessed to give than to receive, and yet, though to receive is less noble than to give, it is necessary that we may know how to receive understandingly. Or else we may block the highest expression of a fellow-soul who has been prompted to give and to share with us. Through our wise and gracious receiving we may be the means of inspiring some deeply wounded soul to find the healing solace of new faith with which to go on to the heights of Christly living.

#### - Selflessness

So it is that all can find the wondrous Golden Key to Life, by following the teaching of the great Light, Jesus Christ, when He told His close disciples that in order to be transformed into pure Light and thus enter into Divine Light, they must first renounce all the finite values of the world, which make for the materialistic glamour of attachment to hollow and perishable things and their childish accumulation, thus keeping the race from rising into the cosmic awareness of soul enlightenment. For we do not become illumined first—and then renounce materialistic values. It is just the other way around. Illumination has its price, too, and it is a high price. We have to give up that which we have learned to love above everything else—our own selfish little personality-nature and all its restless cravings and yearnings for things that

pass away. We must cut the invisible strings of selfish desires that bind the soul and keep pulling it in different directions. Only then can we abide at the serene centre of the soul's atmosphere.

The Buddha put it all clearly when He said in His last words to His disciples before leaving his physical vehicle: "Decay is inherent in all things made of composite parts. The Truth alone will abide forever. Therefore work out your salvation with diligence." But the Buddha knew they would not take it to mean that they should work out their own exclusive salvation for their own personal good alone. For He had already engraved in their consciousness the flaming words of the Bodhisattva vow, which say:

"Never will I seek nor receive private individual salvation; Never will I enter into final peace alone, But forever and everywhere will I live and strive  
For the redemption of every creature throughout the world."

The Christ, too, taught the same ideal. He lived for us and died for us. By following His teachings and living in the Christ-Consciousness we shall find that a wonderful thing has happened to us in our relations with our fellow-men. We shall be able to think, feel, act and speak in no other way but with loving kindness and Christly understanding, and thus the selfless Light of Love in our hearts will thenceforth pour out naught but a sweet benediction to our fellow men and express "Peace be unto you all."

### "CHRISTIAN RELIGION" EXISTED BEFORE CHRIST

That which is called the Christian religion existed among the ancients, and never did not exist, from the beginning of the human race until Christ came in the flesh, at which time the true religion which already existed began to be called Christianity.

—St. Augustine,  
(In Lib. de Vera Religione).

# Strains of an Eternal Gospel

Sri Swami Sivananda

\* How can mortal thought and finite language describe the glory of such a one who was far above the flesh with so profound, fathomless, immutable and yet so humane, loving and compassionate a personality that it is difficult even to imagine that once he had actually breathed this air and trod this earth?

## A Revolutionary Doctrine

The doctrine of Jesus was surely one of the most powerful revolutionary forces to galvanize human thought. He lived far ahead of his time, so that the world of the day utterly failed to appreciate the real significance of his teaching and considered him to be a dangerous blasphemer. No wonder then that the Jewish pharisees found their only redress in arresting and prosecuting this noble, relentless and redoubtable crusader at the Jerusalem court of Pilate, the Roman Governor, who finally decided to get rid of him by a barbarously slow execution upon the cross, so that a religious uprising with consequent political complications might be nipped in the bud.

One of the earliest and most enlightened prophets of spiritual socialism, baptised by John while he was about thirty and preaching in the Aramaic tongue in Judea during the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Jesus Christ was first to advocate in that part of the world the necessity to shed racial and class bigotry and to identify oneself as a common member of the vast family of mankind where everyone was a child of God with equal rights and opportunities to live in peace and to seek Him.

When selfishness and greed were nothing to be ashamed of, it was Jesus who emphasized the necessity of equal distri-

bution of wealth, practical sympathy and loving considerateness for the fellowmen and the strangers alike, of abandoning vengeance and reprisal through forgiveness and charity, to love one's neighbour as one's own self for the obvious reason that there might be no dissunity and disharmony, and, on the whole, to encounter evil by good, because if evil was to be met by evil there would be no end of it.

## Christ's Concept of God

In the Hebrew world, Jesus was first to bring a healthier and more rational concept of God. The Jews believed that God had agreed in a bargain with Father Abraham, deciding their fate arbitrarily and yet reserving special privileges for them over other tribesmen in His own kingdom. This idea was revolting to Christ, and he boldly spoke out that God had nothing to do with one man's comfort and another's suffering, that He was a loving Father to all mankind, claiming no favorites, absolutely impartial, kind and merciful, and knowable through the cleansing of the nature.

In Palestine, when Jesus lived, tribal loyalties and distinctions were rigidly observed, and, as is the case even in our own time, one race looked upon another with contempt and despise and tried to glorify themselves above all others. Jesus could not bear this and sought to break up all differentiation through the gospel of universal brotherhood and all inclusive love. This was one of the reasons, together with his unchangeable conviction in the common fatherhood of God, that outraged the sectarian patriotic fervour of his own people and the preferential, divine hierarchy in the priesthood. He could neither

reconcile himself that there were to be accumulated private property, reserved considerations, justification for earthly pride or for indiscriminate satiation of base impulses, continuation of traditions of habits which sought to set up barriers between men, and atonement for one's misdeeds through monetary dividends. What was the result? Jesus had to be a martyr.

#### His Religion

The religion of the Messiah was the religion of heart, built on the edifice of love. He said that the Kingdom of God was not to be found in this material world of fraud and deceit but in the hearts of good people who had transformed their lower nature. Thus, first of all, Jesus advocated an inner purification and he applied this doctrine on a social basis through his commandments in which he asked not to be promiscuous, not to steal, not to kill, not to bear false witness, not hate and revile, not to defraud. And he went further and said if one really wished to enter the Kingdom of God, he had to renounce earthly riches and vanities. So strong was his reaction to the privileged wealthy class, knowing fully well how corrupting was the influence of gold that he proclaimed, 'It is easier for a camel to enter the eye of a needle than for the rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God' and to a seeker who wanted to inherit the eternal life, he said 'Ye cannot serve God and Mammon for either ye will hate one and love the other, or else ye will hold to the one and despise the other. Renounce everything, take the cross and follow me.'

#### And Teaching

Christ had an immense conviction about the sacredness of what he taught emphatic as he was in his Sermon on the Mount that 'Blessed are they that hungered and

thirsted after righteousness, for they shall be filled; blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy; blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God; and blessed are the peace makers, for they shall be called the sons of God.'

He believed in the Law of Cause and Effect, for he remarked 'Whatever man soweth that shall he also reap'. Many have wrongly accused him of being unduly exuberant in his promises for a future blessedness in heaven. On the contrary, he concerned himself more with the present than with the distant future, since he asked people to live the day well in goodness and in the service of God and 'take no thought for tomorrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.'

Jesus revealed a profound respect for the public sentiment when he said 'The voice of the people is the voice of God'. He had an utter repugnance for religious insincerity, for he was very particular in advising, 'Woe unto you that prayeth thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets that may be seen of men, but thou, when prayest, enter into thy closet and when thou hast shut thy door pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which aeth in secret shall reward thee openly.'

#### If Jesus Appeared Today

It is extremely doubtful if by chance Christ happened to appear in this world again whether people would really listen to him even at this time, in spite of the tremendous proselytising by the unending trails of zealous missionaries, and after all, whether the West itself, the very home of Christianity would be willing to change its ways from so tantalizing a glamour of materialism and its myriads of vested commercial and industrial interests, no-

doubt all meant for the greater and wider comforts of the fellowmen, but none the less resulting in an unsatisfactory whetting of epicurian tendencies and the headiness of power politics. At any rate, Jesus might most likely find himself a stranger if he happened to be in a congress of Churches. Besides, nearly half of Europe and two thirds of Asia will probably refuse him entry visa, and more than eight hundred millions of people he might be barred from access to him. And yet, the world has no other go but to listen to and practise the teaching of the Christ if it is to save

itself from recurrent global conflagrations, inevitable slaughter of great masses of innocent people, unmitigable suffering, and systematic demoralisation.

The pealing of Christmas bells brings us a wistful ray of hope and a languid expectation that the spirit of the Messiah might one day resurrect in all its glory in the hearts of men and women all over the world, and particularly in those that are at the helm of the world governments.

May the grace of Holy Christ be upon us all!

## Behold Jesus In Thy Midst

Sri Swami Sivananda

Praiseworthy, prostrations crores of times at the Holy Feet of Lord Jesus, the Saviour of Mankind, the Eternal Beaumy that shines to guide man along the path of Rectitude to the Destination of Supreme Beatitude.

Lord Jesus is the incarnation of Bold Understanding, Determined Will and Resolute Action. Suddy the Gospels again. Meditate on the resplendent, spirituality glowing Divine Form of Lord Jesus. How sweet, how compassionate, how gentle and loving He was! And yet, He showed no leniency towards Himself. He turned resolutely away from Satan—not that He could ever be tempted, but to set an example before us—and He had no patience with the unrighteous impostors and hypocrites.

Canid anyone on earth declare in more unequivocal, unambiguous and definite terms the rules of moral conduct, the regulations that govern entry into the Kingdom of God, than Lord Jesus has done? Can we profess allegiance to Him and yet ignore His commands? Let every Christian today remember the stirring words of the Lord: "Not every one that cometh unto me,

Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doth the Will of my Father, which is in Heaven." And that Will of the Divine Father, Lord Jesus had not only stated in the plainest language intelligible to the least intelligent among men, but what is even more, has demonstrated in an unforgettable graphic manner in His soul-inspiring life.

Lord Jesus declared that it was worse than useless to run after the things of the world, ignoring the supremely important Spirit within. He knew the form of Satan; and therefore He had forewarned His followers not to let Satan enter any part of their being, and if Satan was detected as having tainted any, to "pluck that part out and cast it out," in order that the entire being might not be tainted, as heedlessness was prone to do. We see the wisdom of His wise Words today. And, what a painful sight it is!

True, Lord Jesus died on the Cross for the redemption of His people. Today from His Eternal Seat in the Kingdom of God, His Divine, Compassionate Heart bleeds even more profusely; for the people of

His time were ignorant of the Law and they erred but the people of the modern world have the resplendent light of Lord Jesus's life and teachings shining and illuminating the path of righteousness and yet they wantonly walk the path of darkness ignorance, sin, selfishness, sensuousness and misery. If His Merciful Heart bled for the ignorant sinners how much more would it bleed for the sins of those who err ignoring His Light!

Is this the way in which you would like humanity to show its gratitude to the Saviour? No a thousand times No It is never too late to mend And there are today thousands of pious devout, righteous men and women in all parts of the globe to whose hearts Lord Jesus is reincarnate as one or more of the divine virtues that He had idealized in His own Divine Personality. These men are not publicized in your newspapers throw away these papers! These men are not in your lime light but it is nothing but crime light, the light in which dance the disciples of Satan. But these pious men of God, may of them walk the humble path unnoticed by the pleasure seeker, the glamour admirer, and the sin blinded 'civilized' man. But they are the salt of the earth, they are the sustainers of real life upon earth, it is their presence that brings down the Lord's richest blessings upon all men, it is their presence that maintains sustains the world. It is they that unostentatiously, but all the same, powerfully radiate peace and happiness. And if today there is even this much of peace and this much of happiness that mankind enjoys it is due to the presence of these divine souls in whose heart the Eternal Jesus has reincarnated in all His spiritual radiance and divine splendour. They have known that Lord Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Worship them Adore them Follow in their footsteps They are not the footprints of these men, they are in fact the Eternal Footsteps that the Lord Jesus has left on the sands of time. Study the lives of these saints Reflect over their divine traits How heroically they have preached in the most trying situations! Emulate them

Christianity is not an arm chair religion, in fact no religion can afford to recline on the arm chair if it is to live Christianity is a Living Religion, a religion which is dynamic and vibrant. So long as there is one pious and devout follower of Christ Christianity will live, there was only one Lord Jesus who is today adored by millions all over the world. Even today Lord Jesus lives in our hearts, because in the worst crises, in the greatest of temptations he triumphed holding aloft by his own life and actions the glory of truth and righteousness. He was not a speculative philosopher, but a living God. Unless this living God is worshipped in a living manner by living His Life, in our own life, all the speculations of philosophy will vanish into thin air in which alone in the vain intellects of the philosophers where alone they had their birth and where alone they existed. Trials and temptations come but to be overcome by the brave. Tests and trying situations are spiritual Vitamin tablets. They come to strengthen your mind and to purify your heart. They are as it were the wise men that discover Jesus in you. To succumb to these trials is weakness. To fast to pray to discern and to overcome these obstacles with the help of the Grace of the Lord is spiritual heroism. When the victory is achieved to feel to realize and to proclaim that it was the Lord's Grace that enabled you to attain victory in real meekness. Meekness is virtue weakness is sin. Learn this great lesson from the life of Lord Jesus.

Study the 'Sermon on the Mount' again and again. Meditate upon it. Choose the Lord's instructions one after the other, month after month, and endeavour diligently to put them into practice. Thus will you grow into a worthy child of Lord Jesus. Thus will you reincarnate Lord Jesus in your own heart. There are many today who truly and sincerely follow His Teach-

ings. In their hearts has Jesus re-incarnated, to guide you, to lead you to the Kingdom of God, where He has His Supreme Seat. May you all walk the Path that Jesus laid out! May you all be the living embodiments of the "Sermon on the Mount." May you realize the Kingdom of God within you, here and now! \*

## Where Are You, O Saviour!

Sti Swami Sivananda

Jesus! Light of the world! My Saviour!  
Where are you?

For, in this dark hour when mankind rushes headlong towards its own destruction there is urgent need for thee!

Where are you, O Saviour? Have you not promised that you will never leave us countless and that you will come to us? This, indeed, is the time when you should reveal yourself to us so that we might follow you in peace and joy.

Alas! my Good Shepherd! Many of thy sheep are lost. But, we don't despair. How kind and precious you are! You take a supreme delight in bringing the lost sheep back to the fold. Each lost sheep adds to your delight. Come, come, there is great work and greater delight awaiting you.

Where are you, O Saviour? Temples have been built for you all over the world. Literally, there is no part of the globe where people do not profess to be your followers. Truly, My Lord, the sun never sets over thy Kingdom on Earth. But, alas, the very people who owe allegiance to you, have surrendered themselves to the evil hands of Satan. They seek to serve you on Sundays and Monday on the rest.

Lord, if a man loves you he will keep

your words, and, the Father will love him and you will come unto him and make your shade with him. Today people remember your name but have forgotten your words—the comforting balm, the invaluable treasure, the fountain of bliss, the nectar of immortality, the philosopher's stone that transforms man into divinity.

You had given us your great Commandment: "Love one another as I have loved you," and you have shown us by your own life that you could (and did) give up your life itself for our sake. Not only is such love vanishing from the face of the earth today, but in his greed fear and hatred, man is ready to cut the throat of his brother. Where are you, O Saviour? Come, come ere it is too late.

When will people realize that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth?" When will they seek the Kingdom of God and let the other things be added unto them at His will? Can there be a warning stronger and clearer than your words. 'Take heed and beware of covetousness.'

Where are you, O Saviour? Come, come, and remind men that he has in his hands a stone with which he can get two fruits at one stroke. If only he understands

aright, and practise your precept: "Sell that ye have, and give alms and provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heaven that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth," he will not only achieve his own salvation, but will create harmony and peace around him and there will be brotherhood and prosperity in the world.

Where are you, O saviour? Your children for whom you gave up your life itself the poor, the downtrodden, the faithful, the persecuted—are oppressed and are deprived of even the little they have. Their oppressors whom you sought to save through your life transforming Message of Love and Oneness are once again straying away into the path of iniquity. You have commanded. "When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed the lame the blind, and thou shalt be blessed." But, everywhere we see feasts and festivities, dinners and garden parties, to which only the friends and the rich neighbours are invited. And what do they do? In your sage counsels were the seeds of peace and prosperity. Discarding them, they gather only to plot against each other, and together against a third. Come, come, O Saviour, now is the time for your clarion call.

Lord! Forget not your Promise 'What ever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do' In your Holy Divine name, I pray Come, O Supreme Monarch of the world!

Enthrone yourself to the hearts of all men. Even as you said, without you nothing can be done.

Where are you, O Saviour? 'Thou art where Thy Word is' This have you revealed to your luminous utterances that you are one with your Law. This Law is the Law of Unity, of Brotherhood, of Love, of Humility, of Forgiveness, of Righteousness, of Charity. I pray to you, on this Most Holy Day of your Birth: Take your birth once again in the hearts of all men and women all over the world and take your birth in the form of this Divine Law. Thus would humanity be saved and thus would Jesus, my Lord, the Son of God, be proclaimed the Eternal Saviour.

Come, O come, Prince of Peace! For your Second Coming are your chosen children, the saints and men of God all over the world, are prayng and waiting. Come in the form of the Sermon on the Mount, every word aglow with your Divine Light. Coming into man's heart, let your Word become the blood of his blood, breath of his life, soul of his soul. Only thus transformed into the very image of your Word shall men regain the Eternal Life, Infinite Joy and Perennial Peace that passeth understanding.

On this Holy Christmas Night, may the Lord be reborn in the hearts of every man and woman in the whole world!

(Christmas Message, 1954)

## THE PRICE OF SALVATION

*Then said Jesus unto his disciples*

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

For the Son of Man shall reward every man according to his works.

Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom.

—Matthew,

# Awaken Jesus In You : And Follow Him

Sri Swami Sivananda

Crises of prostrations to the Lord Jesus, the Beloved Son of God, the Supreme King of kings, the Divine Ruler of the hearts of mankind

Lord Jesus came into this earth to re-establish the Kingdom of God within the heart of man. Deliverance from sin, from ignorance and delusion, from misery and disease, He brought within your easy reach—if only you grasped it.

Faith is the hand that can grasp it, grasp His Radiant Feet—and what are His Feet but Love and Forgiveness

Faith, faith is what mankind lacks woefully today. Worse still, mankind has lost faith in the divine realities, and unfortunately pins its faith on the unreal shadow that looms large over its head. Man believes the unreal to be real and doubts the real! That is the work of Maya, Satan

The simple fishermen of Galilee have set a shining example before us. What did they do when their faith was shaken and the ship was tossed about by the storm? They awakened Lord Jesus and prayed to Him for help

Surely that is what we must do on this great Christmas Day, when the spirit of humanity is tossed about by the storm of evil. Take refuge in Lord Jesus. Awaken Him within you. Awaken the Christ Consciousness within you. Yes, He will say

O ye of little faith, were you afraid? He will stop the surging waves of destruction, and command the storm of evil to cease. And your faith in him will be restored, too.

Restore to the soul, faith in its oneness

with God "I and My Father are one," said the Lord. This realization is the key to perennial peace and eternal bliss.

Restore to the mind faith in the glory of righteousness. Sin is manufactured in the mind, the external organs are only the channels of distribution for this sin. Lord Jesus again and again called upon man to be clean inside. Light the lamp of righteousness in your mind, then you will radiate goodness in all your actions. Be good first, then you will do good.

Restore to the heart, faith in the Lord's Love and Mercy. How merciful and loving is the Lord that He renounces His Divine Abode and takes birth here amongst mortals, in this physical plane of pain and suffering, in order to bring comfort and solace to man! "Be ye perfect even as the Father in Heaven is Perfect." Let this love and this mercy guide your actions. Open your heart, with faith in Lord Jesus, so that He might cast out the devil from your heart—the devil of selfishness, the devil of egoism, the devils of lust, anger and greed.

O Men! Wake up now. There stands the Lord in all His Divine Majesty and says 'Follow Me.' Take up the Cross and follow Him. Be ready to sacrifice everything in order to do His Word. Thus would you earn the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus would you reap the richest of Immortality and Eternal Bliss, and the world inhabited by such followers of Lord Jesus will be the Abode of Peace, Plenty and Prosperity.

May the choicest blessings of the Saviour be upon you all, this joyous Christmas!

# The Voice of Jesus

Sti Swami Sivacanda

Jesus, the Son of God, and Divine Messenger upon earth, is verily the Infinite Love, Compassion and the Saving Grace of the Almighty, descended amidst humanity in the radiant form of a glorious human personality, the like of which mankind has rarely seen. The Almighty Spirit manifested Itself as an embodied Being for the uplift of mankind enmeshed in the binding net of earthly existence. Jesus came with the heartening Message of Hope to humanity weighed down under the burden of its sinful, ungodly life of mere materialistic pursuits. He came to show the direct and easy way of freeing oneself from the guilt and bonds of an undivine living and of attaining the Joy, Bliss and Blessedness of the glorious Divine Life in the Spirit, or Atman. He taught the gospel of a pure life, a life of perfect faith, childlike simplicity and innocence, selflessness and love of all beings. Jesus lived and preached the sublime doctrine of renunciation of mammon, and worship of God.

## Voice of the Eternal Being

The Voice of Jesus is verily the Voice of the Eternal Being. Through Him is expressed the call of the Infinite to the finite, the Cosmic Being to the individual, the call of God to man. His Divine Voice is the same therefore, as the Voice of the Vedas and the Upanishads, the Voice of the Koran, the Zend Avesta, the Dhammapada, and all such sacred scriptures of the great religions of the world. Fundamentally, the gospel that He preached is at one with the gospel expounded through these holy books. It is the way of denying the flesh and asserting the Spirit. It is the way of crucifying the lower self to bring about a glorious Resurrection of the Spirit and the final Ascension

unto the infinitude and the Transcendence unto the Divine. It is no other than the Upanishadic path of rejecting the *Preya* and accepting the *Sreyo*, the negation of the Anatman and the living of the life in the Atman.

Jesus declares "Ye cannot serve both God and mammon." In other words, His teaching implies Detach Attach Detach yourself from material objects of this transient world. Attach yourself to the Eternal Spiritual Treasure of Atman. Christ thus teaches us the great way of going beyond all sin and sorrow. His sermon is that which leads us from the darkness of this worldly existence of birth, death, disease and pain unto the everlasting Light of glorious Divine Consciousness. It takes us away from the unreality of empirical phenomena to the Eternal Verity of Transcendental Being, from the limited mortal existence to Unlimited Life Immortal.

## Who Jesus Was

The vital importance and the deep significance of Jesus and His immortal teachings will become clear to us only when we consider who Jesus was and how He came into being. Jesus was not an ordinary human being. He was the Divine Power and Love, incarnated upon this globe for a special divine purpose. His advent was in the nature of a fulfilment of the Divine Plan for this world process. This will be seen from the very manner of His birth and its background. Even before He illuminated this terrestrial globe by the radiance of His Divine Presence, His advent was proclaimed and preached and broadcast by a Chosen Man of God whom we know as John the Baptist.

It came about thus. Zacharias the priest and his wife Elizabeth were a holy and

woman who was caught in the act of adultery, and were about to punish her with death. At the approach of the Saviour, the hapless woman takes shelter at His feet, shedding tears of remorse. Jesus turns with His serene and yet compelling countenance upon the angry crowd and challenges them to lift a hand against this woman saying "Let him among you who is without sin cast the first stone." There is silence. All angry voices die out. Fear enters the heart of the multitude. Dropping the stones and sticks, the crowd dissipates. Jesus is left alone with the repentant sinner at His feet. He raises her up and sends her away saying "Go and sin no more." In these few words He reveals to us the great Law of the Spiritual Realm, i.e., that the soul which repents sincerely gets absolved of all sins and receives the blessings of the Divine Compassion. O me! Learn ye that if you will aspire for the true Grace, you have but to turn away from your evil ways and resolve that you will "sin no more."

#### Ingress of Divine Blessing

Should you but take this step of turning away from the darkness of evil in life, and step towards the light of a pure and divine life, then indeed you do open yourself up for the ingress of the Lord's blessings. But if these blessings are to enter into your being and attain their fullness and bear fruit in the form of rich spiritual experience, then you must prepare your heart for their right and proper reception just as a farmer prepares the soil fully for the seeds to germinate and develop into a rich harvest.

What important part the right and proper receptivity of the seeker plays in the progress of spiritual life is brought out in a beautiful parable by Jesus. One warm, sultry day in Capernaum the Lord has spent a busy forenoon, preaching, teaching, heal-

ing, consoling, inspiring and instructing vast multitudes that had thronged around Him. Towards evening, He walks upon the shore of the lake Galilee. There, too, the multitudes follow. They press upon Him and Jesus gets into a boat and rowing a few yards away from the shore anchors upon the water. From there He turns upon the eager gathering. In sweet accents His loving words come to them:

He tells them how a farmer scatters the seeds for his field which is by the roadside. There is a strong breeze. Some of the seeds are blown away and fall by the roadside, where birds pick them up and they are lost. Some seeds fall upon dry, hard rocks. There they have no soil to take root in. They wither up and die. Yet others fall upon good soil but being in the midst of thorns and brambles, though the seeds sprout up and the young seedlings grow into small plants, they are choked by thorns and brambles, and finally die. And lastly those seeds that have fallen into good soil grow, develop, flourish and bear unto a rich harvest.

Even so, though the Lord in His Loving Mercy is scattering abroad the precious seeds of spiritual truth, that are to bear a harvest of supreme bliss, yet, unluckily, all do not benefit fully out of them. Some hearts are so much constantly preyed upon by desires and earthly passions (birds) that the blessings of the Lord are not allowed to remain there at all. Some hearts are so totally dry, being devoid of faith and devotion, that in them spiritual truths wither and perish even as the seeds fallen upon rocks do. In some other good natures, seeds of spiritual life take root and start to grow, but alas, the harsh thorns of bad company, worldly associations and impure and undivine environment, choke the young spiritual plant and destroy it.

come to the feast. Those who rejected my invitation shall never taste of my banquet" Even so, when opportunities for spiritual gain are offered, let none not commit the great blunder of rejecting them, for, later on, one will have to lament over the great gain that one deliberately bypassed and missed by one's neglect and heedlessness.

#### Need For Vigilance

Lastly, we come to the beautiful parable of the wise and the foolish bridesmaids, through which Jesus teaches how if we wish to avail of all spiritual opportunities, we need to be most alert and ever vigilant. Out of ten bridesmaids who fell asleep while waiting for the bridegroom, five were wise and they carried spare oil for their lamps but five were foolish and they did not. So when they were suddenly called upon the groom's arrival the lamps of the foolish maidens were out, but the wise ones who had kept the lamps burning bright readily went to the joyous marriage function. But the others were too late and were thus excluded from the rejoicing. So you must ever keep watch for you never know when the auspicious hour of spiritual blessedness comes.

Thus, through all these beautiful and wise parables, the Lord Jesus taught the valuable lessons of truth, repentance, receptivity, renunciation, ready surrender and ever alert spiritual vigilance to the seekers upon the path of Yoga and Self-realization. He taught to us the great lesson of *uttishhata jagrata prapya varannabdhana*. Thus He lived and taught nearly twenty centuries ago. Thus the Light shone and illuminated, and then entered into His Apostles through whom it later spread and enveloped the entire earth.

May all pray to the Blessed Lord Jesus, the Christ, to illumine our inmost being with the Light of His lofty Divine Presence and to graciously bestow upon all the Bliss of Christ Consciousness! May all humbly strive to follow in His footsteps, and thus rise from darkness unto Eternal Light, from this unreal world of ephemeral phenomena unto the Transcendental Reality of the Supreme Being! May all rise beyond this world of mortality and attain to Life Immortal! May the power of Divine Love and Grace lift all from this realm of pain and sorrow into the realm of Eternal Light and Everlasting Bliss! Hail to Jesus Divinity Incarnate! Amen.

#### Enthrone Christ In Your Heart

Lord Jesus had to deal with much graver problems and far more violent opposition than the present day national leaders think they have to. Yet we do not hear that the Christ ever thought of war. 'Hated ceaseth not by hatred, hatred ceaseth by love.' Even when His very life was at stake He never wavered in His Love, even when He was crucified He gave utterance to not a word of vituperation but to a most glorious expression of His Pure Love. Today while this Great Divinity's Name girdles the earth while millions upon millions in every part of the globe profess to owe their allegiance to Him what do we find? The Christ has been exiled from Man's Heart. How can Christ and hatred (or its counterpart fear) live together?

And we clearly see the effect of forsaking the Guiding Hand of Our Saviour. Who loses it the drowning man refuses to grasp the hand of the rescuer? Yet, such is His Mercy that He never withdraws His Hand. His Grace is ever within our reach, if we but care to grasp it.

Beloved Children of the Christ! Wake up now for it is never too late to mend in the Love of your Heart would Lord Jesus will rise again within you. And, the Luminous Cross will remind you of His life breath viz., Service and Sacrifice.

—Sri Swami Sivananda

# Christmas and World Religion

Sri Edward Hahn, M.A.

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\*As Christmas approaches once more there will be many devout believers in God who though not within the registered fold of the Christian Church, will nevertheless be preparing to pay homage, each in his or her own way, to the child born in Nazareth nearly 2,000 years ago. This is indeed appropriate, since Jesus came to give his message to "all that have life in my Name."

This question of name is an interesting one. The Christian Church has a hymn which begins "At the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow." But why at the name "Jesus?" This name is, as it were, the gross form, and is the same as the quite common Jewish name "Joshua." Why should we bow so that any more than to the name "Mr. Smith?"

Surely, this shows how our churchmen have substituted mere historical fact for spiritual truth. The name at which every knee should bow is the name "Christ," the Saviour or "Anointed One" of God. This is the Eteral Name, this is the Inner Truth, this is the real significance of Jesus of Nazareth. But as soon as we recognize that, we can see that Jesus may not necessarily be the only man who has been called to represent God as "Christ." For "Christhood" is a Divine state, a calling from the Highest, and only the Highest can name His Christ. Therefore, what right has any religion to name their own Saviour as the "only Christ," denying the antiquity of the Divine Messengers who have founded other forms of religion? Now one can see clearly why the name "Jesus" is taken by the Church to be the holy name, for if the proposition "Jesus is God" is true, then the Church can justify its claim to a monopoly of Truth. But no man

is God by virtue of his manhood, the gross, unfair manifestation. Man is God by virtue only of his Christhood when that is realized. Jesus had realized his Christhood, and the true proposition is "Christ is God."

When Jesus said "I and my Father are one," he was speaking as Christ; and by "my Name" he meant the name of "Christ." Krishna often uses the first person in the "Bhagavad Gita" in exactly the same sense. This "Christhood" is universal, only awaiting realization. Therefore, true Christianity is a universal religion, but is not that which generally passes by that name. That has well been described as "Churchianity!" Surely the true "Christian" is one who recognizes the Inner Truth of Christhood. That being so, then devout spiritual seekers of all religions and of no religion are truly members of "Christ's Church," of that unseen Spiritual Church which unites all men of goodwill, and transcends all mere outward forms. The outward forms are useful, but not if we mistake them for the Inner Reality. Therefore at this time let all who feel devotion to the holy child Jesus, knowing Him to be a "chosen one" a "Christ" of God, feel that they are free to worship at His feet, and that He is for them as well as for the Church.

We can profitably pursue the subject of names a little further. The Indian Swamis traditionally adopt names that have a particular significance related to the Higher Life. Sivacanda, Krishnacanda, Nirananda, Avyaktananda—Bliss through Siva, through Krishna, through Wisdom, through the Unmanifested, and so forth. Thus they submerge their personal identity in a higher one, and this surely is of

great assistance in losing the ego sense and coming to realization. More than this, something of the Divine qualities of that higher being or concept whose name is adopted will in time superimpose itself upon the man, so that in this way also he gradually becomes less man and more God. For when he says, "I am Siva" or "I am Krishna" or "I am Vishnu" assuredly it is the original gross man who speaks but not Siva Krishna or Vishnu through him. So God spoke through Jesus on whom was conferred the Name of Christ. God is the Unmanifested One ("Father" or "Sor"), Christ is that Universal Consciousness which is the sole manifestation of the Unmanifested ("the only begotten son" or "Tat") and you and I are the instruments through whom, by the power of the Holy Spirit OM, God can become manifest to the Christ. When we become perfect instruments, as Jesus was, we lose our personal identity in Christhood, and thus God manifests through us.

Hindulism seems to me to be much clearer on this subject than is "Churchianity". Churchmen accuse the Hindus of idolatry and point to the galaxy of gods and goddesses who are to Hinduism. But my impression is that those who worship Siva, Krishna, Rama etc., are not confusing these forms with the Unmanifested Reality behind them. "Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms"—so runs part of that beautiful Universal Prayer which Sri Gurudev Swami Sivananda intones every evening at the close of Satsanga. It is "Thee" we worship, the One and only God, Unmanifest, Unnamed, and Unnameable. But as Thou art unnameable, and the limitations of our mind demand that we give Thee a name, what matters it what name we choose?—or in what form we see Thee, who art unseeable? Who enforces that Thou art changed by such

names and forms? Thou who art unchangeable! The truth is that God is one, but His names are legion.

"God made man in His own image." Then presumably, God is the real idolator! Does a Hindu say the image is God? I think not. But Christians teach that God is a person. Here we see the process in reverse, men making God in their own image. They cannot let go of "ego". So they superimpose their "ego" on to God. Well, who are the idolators? Those who serve the Unmanifest God through personality, or those who worship their own projected personality as God? Christians will not accept the Unmanifestedness of God, although they pay lip-service to it. They go so far and then stop. Where do they stop? At the point where their "ego" must be surrendered. This of course is only in theory. In practice, most of them are genuine Bhaktas, and show devotion and self-surrender to a high degree. But they dare not admit the validity of Hinduism in the open coconclaves of the Church. It is only Churchianity that is the enemy; and fortunately there is still plenty of Christianity in the Church.

And what of Christianity outside the Church? There is plenty of that too. Rishikesh is full of Christians and Christmas is the season of Christians. At Christmas we can remember all the "names and forms," for they all reflect one God. In what is God reflected? He is reflected in Christhood. Some of the Hindu gods are perhaps not historical figures. It does not matter. History is not the only valid manifestation of God. If it were suddenly discovered that Jesus never lived at all, Christianity would collapse. But Christianity would live on, for Christhood is still true, and God still speaks through the New Testament. Hinduism is far less vulnerable on

this historical issue. Why should you care whether Vishnu and Siva are historical figures or not? What difference does it make? You seek no monopoly of Truth, only Truth itself: and Truth does not depend on history. History relates material facts, which are quite different. So do statistics. Statistics may say, "the average man is 5 ft 9 1057 33 inches tall."—What does this tell you about Truth? Nothing, because there is no such person as "the average man," and possibly no man is in existence who is exactly 5 ft 9 1057 333 inches tall! Neither statistics nor history can tell you what man is or from where he came—and only when you know the answers to these questions, do you know Truth. You offer your Bhakti to God

through Vishnu or Siva. It works—you attain God-realization. That is all that matters.

At Christmas time, you have a particular form to which to offer your Bhakti, the form of the infant child Jesus. So Jesus was Christhood, and Christhood is universal. That being so, Christmas is a universal season. So it is your season as well as ours! May you all truly enjoy it and may our Bhakti for the child Jesus bring you nearer the goal of Realization of the One without a second. That which is beyond names or forms, merit or demerit, space, time or sense-object, whether called as Brahman, God, Jehovah, The Ultimate, Nirvana, or what you will. It is all One, and so are you!

## Christianity and the Theory of Reincarnation

Sri M. Sundaram, B.A.

It is an apt question with every thinking man whether the theory of Karma or the theory of reincarnation which is predominant in the philosophy of Hinduism and which alone accounts for the inherent variations in the potentialities in every individual and also explains the inevitable variations in the fate of the soul after its departure from the body at death (namely, in the matter of taking subsequent births in bodies corresponding to its characteristics developed in one birth), is also found in other religions. With this view in mind, if a man is to investigate into the teachings of Christ, he is bound to find several passages in His teachings which clearly echo these ideas. Of course, Christ has not taught anything in the form of philosophy as is found in Hinduism. He taught everything in the form of parables. The reason for this is, as Christ Himself has said, the people of His time were too ignorant to

understand anything in the form of philosophy. This is evident from the following.

Saint Mathew Chapter 13, Verses 10 to 15

"And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?"

"He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given."

"Therefore speak I to them in parables, because they, seeing, see not, and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand. For this people's heart is waxed gross."

However, though Christ has not taught anything in the form of philosophy, yet the theories of Karma and rebirth have been brought out or dictated at so many places in His teachings. For example, when Christ speaks about John the Baptist, He says that he is the same as Elijah who was to come.

It was prophesied by Isaieh the prophet that Elijah will be once again born before the birth of Christ to make the path clear for Him. As predicted by Isaieh, John the Baptist was born and he was preaching the coming of Jesus of Nazareth. Because he was righteous and was preaching against the unrighteous actions of the Jews, he was stoned. When speaking about John the Baptist, Christ says that he was the same Elijah who had taken another birth to bear witness to Jesus. These are the words we find in the Scripture.

Saint Mathew, Chapter 17, Verses 10 to 13

"And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that 'Elijah must first come?'

'And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elijah truly shall first come, and restore all things.'

"But I say unto you, 'That Elijah is come already and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise also the Son of Man sitteth of them.' Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist."

From the above it is clear that the idea of a man taking another birth was current among the Jews and has been confirmed by Jesus by saying that John the Baptist was the same as Elijah.

At another place, Jesus was speaking to one Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews

Saint John, Chapter 3, Verses 3 to 8

"Jesus answered and said unto him: Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

"Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?"

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

These verses clearly indicate the theory of rebirth. But some give altogether a different meaning saying that the rebirth mentioned by Jesus means merely becoming spiritual and not the real actual rebirth in a womb once again. If it is to be taken in his view to avoid acceptance of the theory of rebirth, how will these people explain the first quoted passage above, viz., that of Elijah coming as John once again. Therefore if we read the above verses in the light of the first, it will appear most probable that Christ should have meant in those verses the actual theory of rebirth.

## THE TRUE VINE

*Jesus said*

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit. for without me ye can do nothing.....If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you.

—John

# Yoga and Christianity

Sri Edward Hain, M.A  
[London]

No day should pass without the human spirit withdrawing steadily and of set purpose into the embrace of that Interior Peace. This withdrawal should be practised by every Christian. If only for a few minutes every day.

(Father Holmes in *The Presence of God*)

To Christian countries, there is no idea that there is something in Yoga which is alien to Christianity. This is not the case. In fact, for the practice of Yoga can be a helpful complement to the practice of Christianity or for that matter of any other religion. The writer was brought up as a Christian and has found that the fundamental Truth at the core of both the Yoga Philosophy and the original Christianity is the same.

I use the term original Christianity, because the Christian religion today is very different from what it was in the years immediately following the Christ's Ascension. It is of the utmost importance that we should try to discover what it is that is missing today, so that our own Christian faith may once more become a full-fledged medium for the fulfilment of the Divine Purpose on earth instead of, as so often, alas a mere vehicle of those who desire to claim to the detriment of other faiths, the monopoly of Truth for themselves with consequent bigotry, sectarianism and shallow worldliness. Christianity is not alone in these errors, for to some extent they are the errors into which all the great bodies of religion in the world have fallen through the influence of human

weakness working through the years.

It would require a far more scholarly research than what I am able to discuss here to discover all that has been lost from the religion which Jesus of Nazareth taught and lived over 1900 years ago. Nevertheless we can follow certain very clear pointers which are to be found in Jesus' own words as reported to us through the Holy Scriptures and I suggest that one result of paying attention to these pointers will be to show that the practice of Yoga, in its highest forms, can fill in any rate some of the gaps which the orthodox Christian Church\* seems unable to fill today. So far, therefore, from being opposed to Christianity Yoga can actually reinforce and illuminate the Christian faith as indeed it can do to any of the great religions. The Truth at the core of all is the same, only the outer husks differ.

The first thing to be clear about is that Yoga itself is not a religion. Yoga in its highest form is a devotional technique, just as prayer going to church, meditation, practising good works etc., are devotional techniques. None of these are religion, they are the instruments of religion irrespective of what that religion may be. So also with the mystical type of the techniques of Yoga: it is not by itself a religion but it could truly be described as the handmaid of religion.

## Mysticism and Christianity

I have used the word 'mystical'. Yoga in its highest aspect has something in common with mysticism, and as such it is

\* I realize that to use the general term "The Christian Church" is an over-simplification and that the errors here ascribed to it are less true of some sects than of others. The truth of my assertions, which are intended to be factual and not critical, should be taken in a general sense. The individual conscience can if it wishes decide where the gap does or does not fit in relation to specific charges.

liable to be suspect in the West. It is extraordinary that some eminent church leaders and theologians are anxious to assert that Christianity has no part of mysticism, forgetting that there have been great Christian mystics, such as St. Theresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, Brother Lawrence and many others. In Paramahansa Yogananda's *Autobiography of a Yogi*, there is an enthralling chapter on his meeting with Therese Neumann, the famous Catholic stigmatist and mystic of Bavaria. One of the most striking features of this chapter is the evidence of instantaneous intuitive understanding between the Christian and the Yogi. For these children of God, united in His one universal light, there were no barriers of sect or creed.

In his book, *The Scandal of Christianity*, Professor Emil Brunner, the eminent Swiss theologian, says, "The God of Revelation" (i.e., of Christianity) "purposes communion; the God of mysticism purposes unity." There are two fallacies in this statement. First, there are not, and cannot be, more than one God; there can only be different ideas of God. But, even if we are charitable enough to assume that by "the God of revelation," and "the God of mysticism," Professor Brunner means "the Christian's idea of God," and "the mystic's idea of God," the second fallacy still remains, namely, that there are people who are both Christians and mystics. Apart even from individual Christian mystics of the past, there are still today several Contemplative Orders, of whom the Jesuits have evolved a meditative technique which in some ways resembles that of Yoga. How, then, can one and the same person have two different ideas about God? The truth is that "Communion" and "Union" are two different experiences, both perfectly valid

along the path to the Ultimate Reality. The mystic himself—including the Yogi—often speaks of "communion" with God; for this is the Bhakti stage, when the aspirant achieves spiritual illumination through an object of devotion and love, expressed through Personality. The object of the Christian's devotion is Jesus of Nazareth, and for the Christian He is the True Light.

#### The Christ-Consciousness

But there is yet the ultimate stage, when the aspirant is granted the "Christ-consciousness" (TAT of the Hindu Trinity)\* and has the experiences of actually becoming one with the Infinite. This experience (Samadhi or Nirvana) is inexpressible and incontrovertible and is the aim of Adyamata Yoga. It is what Jesus Himself referred to when He said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." (John iv, 6). By this, Jesus did not mean, as some assert, that He was the only Son of God. Jesus had completely emptied himself of the "ego" and claimed nothing for Himself ("Not I, but He that sent Me" was His constant reminder.) What Jesus meant was that only through the "Christ-Consciousness," with which He Himself was completely identified was it possible to obtain realization of the Ultimate Truth. (The "Father" or "Sat" of the Hindu Trinity)\* In this sense, too, is the Christ the "only begotten Son" of the Father—that is the "Christ-Consciousness" or the sole reflection, or manifestation within vibratory creation of the Ultimate, or the pure Being, which is beyond vibratory creation. But we are all the sons of God, as Jesus Himself implied when He said, "Whosoever shall do the will of My Father, Which is in Heaven, the same is My brother and sister and mother" (Matthew xii, 50), and which is echoed in

\* The Hindu 'Aum Tat Sat' Trinity is less familiar to West than Brahma, Vishnu, Siva. The latter are dramatizations in terms of personality.

St. John's joyous cry, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God." (John iii, 1). The whole point of Jesus' life was to show man that they too could manifest the "Christ-Consciousness." Did He not give us the clear command, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father, which is in Heaven, is perfect?" (Matthew v, 48).

Now, Adhyatma Yoga\* makes the following assertions:

1. That God alone is real and all else is unreal, temporary and changing.
2. That the soul of man, in essence, is identical with the essence of God (as the essence of the drop of water is identical with the essence of the ocean).
3. That this identity of man's soul with God can consciously realized while he is actively engaged in the duties of life. ("Samadhi" = the merging of the drop into the ocean).
4. That the purpose of life is to realize this identity and acquire unbroken happiness and peace and the ability to impart them to others.

Let us compare these four assertions with the following statements found in the Bible:

1. (a) "In the beginning was God"..... (Genesis, i, 1)

(b) "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God .... All things were made by Him." (John, i, 1, and 3)

2. "God created man in his own image" (Genesis, i, 27)

3. (a) "I and my Father are One" (John, x, 30)

(b) "But as many as received Him, to whom gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed in His

Name." (John, 1, 12)

4. (a) "Be ye therefore perfect..... ."

(b) "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God (Matthew, vi, 33)

(c) "The Kingdom of God is within you" (Luke, xvii, 21)

(d) "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works" (Matthew, v, 16)

In every respect, the assertions of Adhyatma Yoga correspond to the Biblical statements. Here is a short summary which synthesizes the two:

1. God was in the beginning, and all things, without exception, were made by Him. In other words, everything, derives from the one, ultimate Reality. Only the one, therefore, is ultimately Real.

2. Man was created in God's image, though not in a physical sense, as nothing physical is ultimately real. The image is in spirit or essence.

3. Jesus Himself had attained unity with the Ultimate, and, as St. John testifies, all those who "receive Him" or "believe in His name" (i.e., are established in the "Christ-Consciousness") can attain the same unity ("become the Sons of God," as He Who was One with the Father, was the Son of God).

4. We are to become perfect through seeking the Kingdom of God before all else. Having found the light within, we are thereafter to let that light shine forth to others.

#### Message of the Christ

The very essence of Christ's teaching is contained in His answer to the Pharisees concerning the Kingdom of God. "The Kingdom of God" He declared, "Cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, 'Lo here!' or 'Lo there!'; for, behold

\* This statement of Adhyatma Yoga is based on the creed of the organization, Shanti Sadan (29 Chepstow Villas, London, W. II), where the teachings are given in the traditional Hindu way.

"The Kingdom of God is within you." Here is a pointer to Truth from Christ's own lips which shines like a beacon down the ages. Here is the clue to our search for a purpose in life, here and in the injunction, "let your light shine before men." The Christian Church\* today reiterates the second but it largely ignores the first. Yet how can our light shine forth if we have not opened our inner doors? Christ's guidance is clear—"The Kingdom is within." So Christ Himself the most ideal Saviour of the modern world, confirms to the Ancient Wisdom as taught by Yoga.

Unquestionably it is a consensus then, to affirm that mysticism is the prerogative of a favoured few? Christ's message was for the world, "but the world heeded Him not." Alas! the world heeds Him not today except when they invoke His Name to prove the other person wrong. Where is our Ahimsa, or non-violence, which Christ put to the forefront of His teaching? Is it to be found in the Church which has urged the slaughter of the Saracens or the torturing of heretics? For all these things we suffer today, and unto us is done, in Europe, what we have done unto others in the past. My indictment of the church on this matter is an indictment of all of us, is an indictment of myself as a member of the Church. Let us face the fact that we are reaping our own Karma—that is the result of our own past actions. Let us accept it with an even mind and let us search for the Divine Light within for it is there that we shall find that the essence of our being is identical with that of all living creatures, because we are all God's children. This realization alone will light the lamp of universal love, which is the only source of true non-violence. From this love springs—the love that loves its enemies—con spring the Brotherhood of Man in practice.

This is what Yoga teaches. Yoga, therefore, can illumine our understanding on this important aspect of Christ's teaching, as well as provide us with a means of achieving it.

#### The Balanced Life

Of course, we used to be sceptical about our mysticism. It is true that retirement from worldly affairs into a forest, or mountain-cave, or monasticism is not for the majority of us. Christ taught us to "Let our light shine forth," and Yoga teaches us to fulfil our responsibilities according to the circumstances in which we find ourselves (Karma Yoga). We can do either if we retire prematurely from the world. We are here for a purpose and we need to aim our arrow at the target. To do this, we withdraw our consciousness, as the archer withdraws the string of his bow, but the archer does not withdraw the bow as well! If he did so, the arrow would never hit the target. The bow is "ego," and this must be left behind, outside, where it belongs. True withdrawal of consciousness is not the same thing as ego-centricity. Those who use this argument against mysticism merely betray their own identification of consciousness with "ego." Ego-centricity has its roots in anxiety about pleasure and pain, and in never-satiety of the mind. By withdrawing our consciousness, we become independent of pleasure and pain and make the mind still. Most of us habitually identify our consciousness with "ego," but, in fact, they are utterly different. Let us, therefore, devote a quarter or half-an-hour each day to this practice of withdrawing our consciousness in order to find the light within, leaving our "ego" behind.

Christ gives us the command, "Yoga gives us a teacher." Thus, we shall find our inspiration, our "Focus of Poise," so that our erring may hit the target of life.

\* See note on page 432

For the rest of the day we should live that life, i.e. a spirit of dedication, identifying ourselves with our true spiritual essence and having abandoned the "ego." With our will thus identified with God's Will, we will then be able to allow God to "flow through" us.

This is the truly balanced life, the life of the true Christian and of true Yogi. "Not me, but God through me; not I, but He that sent me." Our enemy is the "ego" and unless our motive is practising Yoga is pure, there is a danger hereof.

There are those who have taken up Yoga as a means of escape from the world, or for other selfish motives. Such men have never abandoned their "ego," but have merely locked it up, so that it should not get hurt. They are like the archer who withdraws the bow as well as the string and, like him, they have missed their target. They are not true Yogins, but mere escapists and feeble imitators.

There are, of course, true sages who have retired from the world to fulfil some special mission or the spiritual peace, and through whom God has given or inspired Scriptures such as the Upashads and parts of our own Bible, or who, like the Maharsi (Great Sage) of Arunachala, have given peace, inspiration and healing to thousands of pilgrims by the very grace of their presence.

#### Quest for Truth

But for the rest of us, Yoga needs to be something practical. The ideal is that the spirit of Yoga should pervade our life itself, i.e., our thought, speech and action should be progressively directed towards perfection through the means of a "good life." The important thing is that we should get

over our selfish "ego" and bring harmony to our life. This is the teaching of Yoga and also what Christ meant when he said, "He who would lose his life (—ego) for My sake (for the sake of illumination in the Christ-consciousness) shall find it (his true life of Liberation and Immortality)."

Yoga, then, is concerned with the quest for Divine Truth (the Kingdom of God) which is hidden deep within man's soul. In this, as I have demonstrated, it is fully in accord with Christ's own teaching. Moreover, it does supply a delicate technique of solitary devotion such as we do not find in Christianity today.

Nevertheless, we should not fall into the opposite error of neglecting our common devotions, of which the Church is the proper focus in Christian countries.

A balanced religion has its solitary and communal expressions, just as the balanced life has its inner and outer aspects. Both are true; both are necessary.

With dedication and selflessness, therefore, let us give our devotion to seeking that Higher Being within ourselves. "Man's true Self is not man's own, but God's." Let us meditate on this Divine Presence for a few minutes daily, and let that spiritual Consciousness flow out through us to guide our work, to harmonize our relationships, and to illuminate the world around us. That is true Yoga and true Christianity, and is well summed up by a certain western mystic who said when asked what was his aim in life: "To bring to earth what I have found in Heaven." This is the goal to which Yoga and Christianity can lead us all.

# Vedanta and Christianity

## — Some Noteworthy Parallels —

Sri Michael Sawtell  
[Sydney]

The male thought that I have to nifai is that there is only one religion in the world, but that it may be expressed in many different ways, forms and tongues. Let me explain that Jesus Himself was a Vedantin and that what we call Christianity is but one of the many forms of the aqalesa Wisdom, Truth, Reality or Vedanta.

Vedanta philosophy consists of three great laws, and they are: firstly, that the real Man is Divine; secondly, that the hidden meaolog or purpose of life is for man to regain a self-conscious realization of his Divine Over-Soul; and thirdly, that all religions are essentially one. In the Christian religion, there is, of course, the Biblical authority for these laws.

I am willing to admit that if you base your understanding of true religion upon a literal reading of the Bible or any other Scripture, you will become hopelessly confused and dogmatic. The orthodox Church, it seems to me, confuses the disciple Jesus with the World-Teacher or Avatar Christ. The Biblical account of the life of Jesus, if read literally, confuses the physical life of a disciple with the initiation of a soul. This and many other criticisms, I must admit, in my Scriptore that has to be read by the masses, conceal the real Truth under the cover of myths and legends. The real truth has to be dug out, and there is enough hidden Truth in both the Old and the New Testaments to show to discerning students that Christianity and Vedanta are one.

### Purpose of Vedants

That great soul, Swami Vivekananda, who first brought Vedanta to the West in modern times, said in one of his lectures, that the whole purpose of Vedanta was to

help men to overcome the illusion of Maya. Now Jesus called Maya "This World," and Jesus also exhorted us to get out of Maya, when he said, "In this world, ye shall have tribulation. Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Every religion offers to us a way to overcome Maya or illusion of this physical world, which is never what it appears to be. Even materialistic physical science will now admit that. I think that St. Paul summed up Maya splendidly when he said, "We see through a dark glass." The only way to overcome the illusion of Maya is to purge the soul of all materialistic desires, and by a self-conscious effort to develop those mystical faculties of the soul by which we are able to discern the Real World that has many names. This is the teaching of Vedanta, and Jesus also taught the same when he declared, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

### Truth of Resurrection

There are numerous ways or Yogas, as they are called, leading to Truth. That is why the Gita says, "All roads, that man do take, are God's;" in the Gospel of Saint John, Jesus boldly announces that He is the way, the truth and the life; more important still, He says, "I am the resurrection." This truth of the resurrection is pure Vedanta. It is the most important truth in Christianity; yet it is greatly misunderstood by the orthodox Christian Churches.

I think that a comparative study of Vedanta would help the orthodox Christian Churches to understand the mystery of overcoming death, which St. Paul called the "last enemy." Strange as it may seem to some of the orthodox Churches with all

their rituals and ceremonies concerning the destruction of the physical body, Jesus taught his disciples that they ought to conquer death. Now this teaching must not be confused with the relatively false teaching of the immortality of the present physical body, but we have to learn whilst still in the flesh to create an ethereal body, an entity not made by physical implements, but a glorified existence that cannot be destroyed.

Whilst the soul is living in the illusion of Maya and is blinded by the physical delight of the senses, the human race will always be living in the contradictions of good and evil—enquilled in Maya and death. Jesus exhorted all to overcome death and Maya. He said again and again, 'Those who keep my words shall not see death.' Also, 'My words are Spirit and my words are Life.' Jesus did only teach all this, but he also demonstrated it to his two life by his acts of dematerialization, and finally by his resurrection. The resurrection is the most important part of the life and teachings of the Avatar Christ. The resurrection is the culmination of Vedanta.

#### Reincarnation

Therefore I suggest that there will come a time in the evolution of aspiring souls when they will outlive the relative truth of reincarnation. Belief in reincarnation is a step and not a stop, for there is a higher truth than reincarnation, which is Resurrection. That is the real truth that Christianity offers to the modern world. That is why Christianity does not stress the fact of reincarnation.

We know that Jesus accepted reincarnation as a fact, for on one occasion, He told His hearers that John the Baptist was a reincarnation of the prophet Elijah. If ordinary men accept reincarnation as final and endless and not what Jesus and St.

Paul called the raising of the dead, then there is a great danger of their putting off the day of resurrection and sinking back into apathy.

Every race, every religion and every individual has a certain mission or task to perform, which they must either achieve or suffer. If nations or individuals do not achieve their spiritual destiny, then they are bound to feel the severity of the cosmic Law. Those who will not learn must suffer. Souls that will not make an effort to overcome Maya cannot escape the consequences of illusion.

#### Transfiguration Of Body

One of the great founders of Christianity, St. Paul, said, "Behold, I shew you a great mystery." In a great glowing passage (1 Cor. XV), he set forth the entire doctrine of the transmutation of the animal body into a glorified body now, before what we call the death of the physical body. St. Paul asserted that it was not only possible, but desirable for all Christians to put on before physical death the incorruptible, ethereal and immortal body of a realized soul. Jesus did this before His Crucifixion, when he appeared to his disciples in his glorified body during His Transfiguration on the Mount. All through the Bible, for those who are able to read with enlightenment, and not by the latter that killeth the spirit, is found the truth of overcoming Maya and death. Moses, Enoch and Elijah did not see death. Elijah "went up in chariot," which is symbolical of the glorified body.

#### Samadhi Or Christ-Consciousness

Now, what has the ageless Wisdom of Vedanta to say about this truth of the resurrection? All the great teachers of Vedanta urge all thinkers to strive after and fit themselves for that state of consciousness that Vedanta calls Samadhi. Jesus also meant the same when he said:

"Be ye perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect." Samadhi is the perfected state of Christ-Consciousness. There are, says Vedanta, three ordinary states of human consciousness and they are waking, dreaming and deep sleep. But in none of these does man know the real world, or what Jesus called the Kingdom of Heaven, or what Buddha called Nirvana, or what Plato called the Archetypal world. It is only by attaining the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi, says Vedanta, that man can overcome Maya and death. Vedaanta has a great deal to say about this fourth state of consciousness called Nirvikalpa Samadhi. The great Teachers of Vedanta say that once a man reaches this state, he overcomes Karma, bondage, limitation and death. He can then dematerialize and materialize at will. This is what Jesus did.

#### Real Experience Needed

Jesus also followed the Eastern or Vedaanta method of teaching about the Reality or God. He taught in parables, stories the same as Buddha, he avoided direct

answers, and taught through examples. Of course, His own life was the greatest example of all. We westerners talk and write too much, before we have experienced Samadhi or the Christ-Consciousness. Therefore much of our talk is merely theoretical and intellectual, a form of Maya. mere talk is cheap and easy. High sounding words, pious sentiments and intellectual theories, are not proof of having reached Samadhi. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Of Buddha it was said, "The Tathagata has no theories." Theories or dogmas belong to the lower mind, which any ignorant and evil-minded person may repeat. Jesus, the same as all other true prophets who have experienced Samadhi, was able to say, "The Father and I are One." And again, "Who hath seen me hath seen the Father." Bold and true statements which He proved by his resurrection.

These common parallels of thought world show that esoterically and philosophically understood Christianity and Vedanta are one in their ultimate aspects.

## Teachings of Saint Paul

### From the Epistle to the Ephesians

There is one body and one spirit even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind having the understanding darkened being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart, who, being passed feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness.

Let all bitterness, and wrath and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you. And be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.

# Christian Religion and Vedanta Philosophy

Mrs. Hanaa Herrmann  
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We European devotees and disciples of Swami Sivanandaaji, have an intense wish that he should come to Europe as a most urgent messenger of the Divine Light. It is in this connection that I am being led to speak about the Christian conception of sin and the absolute misconception of the Christians as to what Self-realization means.

My intention is to let you all gain an insight into the average Christian mentality, so as to facilitate for Swamiji, and those who will accompany him, the way of access to the religious European ways of thinking and believing.

Let me try to compare the Christian and the Vedantic view of man. If I shall speak far more of the Christian attitude, it is because this one will be more or less unknown to you, while many of you are much better versed in Vedantic philosophy than I. I trust in the Divine Presence giving the inspiration and the suitable words to express what has to be said.

Before going into my subject, I wish to stress the point that when I speak about Christians, Catholics or Protestants, I apply to the confessional, the exoteric line, the so-called Church people.

The mystic, esoteric line is altogether different.

Mystics in all the different countries and religions are very near each other. Their terminology may differ, their way of attainment, their experience is the same.

So, as said before, I apply to the people in the restricted traditional sense of Christians, and I shall have more to say about the so-called pious, orthodox Christians, than about the liberal ones. The last ones are mostly intellectual, ethically,

morally minded people. Jesus Christ means an example for them to follow, an incitement for loving God and serving Him.

## Conception of Sin

Swamiji declares that there is no sin, only ignorance and veils. If we recognize the causes of them, mind, if we learn to control it, or even to surpass it, we shall be healed from our blindness, links and weaknesses. If Swamiji should say this in Europe, Christians will not only be perplexed, they will literally be horrified, as speaking like this means sacrilege. Sin is the corner-stone of their theology. All our Christian efforts go towards overcoming sin and becoming good, pleasing God. And as we keep concentrating on our shortcomings and defects, they become stronger and all our sincere resolutions to conquer these weaknesses, all our prayers for deliverance seem to be of no avail.

To be sure, superficial worldly people are not being bothered by this problem, nor those self-conceited, proud and selfish individuals, who never make mistakes. I have here in view earnest, sincere and pious souls intent on obeying and pleasing God who again and again get caught in the vicious circle of the sin, the repenting individual and the personal little self again breaking through. This helpless psychological state leads to welcoming, to even needing the concept, that Jesus Christ had to be put on the Cross for expiating our sins. He is the lamb sacrificed because of our wickedness.

## Sacrifice

The idea of a sacrifice in the form of an animal or a human being, is very old

We meet it in the Old Testament under the name of the scape-goat. As a ritual, a buck was killed for the expiation of the Jews' sins. This idea was still alive in the Israelitic consciousness. Jesus Christ, as an expiator of sins, took the place of the scape-goat. The worst is, that we have offended the Almighty One, God. All the terrible transgressions of humanity in the present and in ancient times have built a wall between Him and us. He is offended and angry. He must be appeased. A victim, a sacrifice is needed, else there can be no reconciliation, no pardon for wicked, sinful mankind.

#### Love and Justice

Another more noble concept holds that as God is not only love, but also justice, He is bound to ask a condition, a sacrifice for the remission of our sins.

At this critical point enters the comforting factor of God's fatherly love. This anger lasts not for ever. He takes pity on erring mankind. But how is the reconciliation going to be instrumented? The highest, most precious sacrifice will have to be made. There is no other way out of the difficulty. So out of deepest love and compassion, because of grace, God allows His son, the only begotten son, as he is called,—Jesus Christ, to expire on the Cross, to serve as the sacrifice needed for expiation and reconciliation. God, though we have offended Him so much, gives us Him, who is closest to His Heart, His son, in order to save us from perishing. Now the stress is on His immeasurable love. But there is a condition. We must believe in the effect of Jesus Christ's death as the atonement of our sins. Only then can they be taken from us. We must believe in Him as the carrier of our sins. He took them on Hm, bore them up to the Cross and there dissolved them by dying for us. Only by

believing in Jesus as our Saviour and Redeemer, can we be pardoned and delivered. We even have to believe in the secret, and magical power of the blood of Jesus, as the stoning and dissolving power. This statement is being held up by certain sayings of Jesus, which are being interpreted in a purely material sense, while they have an esoteric meaning.

#### Atonement

The expression atonement is a very characteristic example of a materialistic, esoteric interpretation. Instead of saying atonement, meaning expiation, we should say at-one-ment, that is identification, identity. We should become one with the Christ-consciousness, with Atman. You see by this instance how far the materially-minded get away from the original truth.

There would be a mighty argument against this expiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ. I very much wonder that our theologians are mindless of it. In the Old Testament there is the impressive story of Abraham who believed God wanted him to kill his only beloved son Isaac, as a sacrifice. At the very moment when raising his knife for cutting the throat of his only child, an angel appeared, and by holding his hand prevented him from performing the act. And at the very moment also a buck was there to be sacrificed instead. If this story should have been remembered, the idea of expiation by the death of a human being might have been checked.

#### Redemption

Still, the continual stress on sin invariably leads to the need of redemption, and as the religiousists are not experienced inside, to the heart, but put outside, into the world of appearance, the average Christian needs a redeemer, a personal redeemer, a historical personality, to take

the unbearable load from him. But mind, His sacrifice is only meant for those who believe in it. All those who cannot except the fact of the forgiveness of sins because of His blood, stand for us, are outside the fence, they do not belong to Him, they are lost.

#### Vedantic Point of View

Compare with this concept of some being inside and the others outside the fence, literally meaning bereft of light and hope, the message of Vedanta that Atma is dwelling in all, that in reality there is only He, without a second. In your case there is not that sense of utter forlornness and desolation. As God—for the average Christian—is towering so high above, so far away, Jesus Christ will always—in their minds—be the symbol and the incarnation of the Divine Grace.

In Vedantic scriptures there is also a sharp distinction between the upper and the lower regions for the depraved souls, and when you hear the Slokas about hell, you may feel tempted to think that there is hardly any difference between the Christians and the Vedantic lost-ones. Still there is. In Vedanta, it is not the want of consent and faith to a dogma which makes you keep your sins and go down to a place of torment; it is exclusively your link with the body and its appetites. It is a question of discrimination and of a moral decision. While Atma, the divine Reality is being incessantly proclaimed. We Christians have the moral side as well, but the faith and consent problem added to it. And then we have not your wondrous thence for reincarnation. Your earth-bound, wicked souls will not be damned and be suffering for ever, they reincarnate and get opportunities for a change of mind and learning, while the Christians lost-ones have none. All is definite and irrevocable. On the day of judgment, e

time after death, they will all be summoned to appear before the Christ. Note that here the name of Jesus is left out. It is Christ, the Lord of the universe. He will order to His right side those who have performed right, pure actions in their life and to His left the unworthy ones. And the latter will now definitely be summoned for eternal punishment.

#### Different Approaches

Here our point is most important to be noted. The reason for being promoted or refused is no longer dependent upon our accepting or refusing Jesus Christ's bloody sacrifice for the remission of sins. This so much accentuated condition by orthodox Christians, is not at all being mentioned here. And the One pronouncing judgment, is not Jesus, but the Christ, the Ascended One.

To the good righteous souls, standing at the right side, He says: "I have been asked and you have procured me clothing, I have been hungry and you have given me food. I have been in prison and you have visited me. Enter into the Joy of the Lord." Note the trilogy revealing the spiritual plane.

Thee the virtuous ones will ask, "Lord, when have we seen you asked, hungry or in prison?" and He will answer "When you have done to one of the most wretched among men, that you have done unto Me."

And to those on the left hand the Lord will say, "I have been asked and you have not given me clothing. I have been hungry and you have not given me food, I have been in prison and you have not visited me." And when those accused ones will ask, "Lord, when have we seen you asked and have given you no clothing? When have we seen you hungry and have given you no food, and when have we seen you in prison and have not visited you?" He will answer, "What you have omitted do-

ing to any one of those wretched ones, that you have omitted doing for me Go and reap the fruit of your wickedness!"

You see how the premises have been altered. Here you have a purely moral, ethical standard, analogous to the Vedantic one, only the consequences are not the same. Sinful Christians go to eternal punishment. The Vedantic philosophy has a hope in view, a path of betterment re-incarnation.

### Reincarnation

It means a risk to speak to Church people about reincarnation in Europe. The Catholic and the Evangelical Church are opposed to it, maintaining that Jesus Christ had and has nothing to do with it. If so, He would have mentioned the subject and spoken about it. With that they do not seem to know that until the Concilium of Nices, I think it was in 325 A.C., everybody believed in reincarnation and that then and there a small majority of church dignitaries voted for this axiom to be suppressed. In future Constantin, the Great was present at this concilium or congress, and when all those elders and chiefs could not arrive at a unanimous decision as to whether in future the idea of reincarnation was to be upheld or suppressed, Constantin gave them twenty-four hours time for a definitive agreement. He declared that if they should not arrive at it, he would retire his proposal of making the Christian religion the religion of his state, the official religion of the empire. The atmosphere of the assembled leaders was hot and turbulent. After Constantin's verdict they got back to reason, and the result of voting was the one above-mentioned.

### An Accepted Old Belief

Swamiji knows by name and correspondence, the Persian author, teacher and mystic Iranschar who has made many conferences in Switzerland and is still living there. He also held esoteric courses

In one of his lectures he made us note down twenty two biblical passages referring to reincarnation. I shall give you an instance from the Old Testament. There is one of King David's sons, called Pasima, with the ever-recurring refrain or chorus at the end of each strophe "Come again, ye children of men!" with a point of exclamation at the end. From what Iranschar told us, the translation is wrong. It should be, "You come again, you children of men."

At the time when Jesus Christ lived, reincarnation was a common belief, so that there was no need for Him to especially speak about it. Still we have a record of a conversation between Him and His disciples which clearly shows that reincarnation was one of His tenets.

One of Jesus' disciples asked Him, "Are you the Messiah the one to come, or are we to wait for another one?" And He adds "However it is said in the scriptures that Elijah will have to come again before the Messiah appears." Jesus answers, "Elijah has actually come again and they did to him what they wanted to." Then the commentary runs, "the disciples understood that the Master referred to John, the Baptist." This one had just been killed by King Herod.

This conversation about the appearance of the Messiah was wholly misconceived by me until I heard of reincarnation. Then it at once has a meaning while it will never have any sense for our church people.

In certain European groups, the faith in reincarnation is an obvious premise. Theosophists, Anthroposophists, New Thought members, Ynqa pupils and many other esoteric groups are openly professing the idea. But they are considered as heretics by the Christian Church. Swamiji's mission in Europe will be to open the inner eyes

and the cramped longing heart of ever so many people intent on h earing liberating truth.

### Self-realization

I shall now take up the idea and aim of Self-realization, the climax of what has to be achieved by all of us, sooner or later. It is the fruit of very many incarnations, struggles, sufferings and defeats, the blossom of purity and wisdom, being crowned by the fruit of unconditioned surrender and love, merging—as Maya, as perfect Ahamkaric dissolution, as a nothing—into cosmic and later into Atmic consciousness.

But, alas, it is equal to jumping into the air or to picking up stones when we venture to speak about Self-realization to church people in Europe, be they catholic or protestant, as they have no clear notion or even none at all about the two selves. If we say God-realization, the shock will be harder still.

The voice of conscience presents a preliminary stage for discovering the existence of the Higher Self, the voice being a certain limited reflection of a higher, a second instance, manifesting on lower or more purified planes of awareness. But even this voice of conscience-problem is not solved in the Christian ideology, which psychology has made it one of its subjects. Still Vedantic philosophy alone has entirely mastered the many sided problem by taking into account all planes of consciousness and the intricate working of the mind.

As mentioned before, there is another obstacle for Christians for understanding the existence and nature of the two selves, the sense of distance. God is so far away in the Heavens, so very high up above us and beyond us. How could we ever ascend to His height? Never.

### Higher Self

The voice of conscience is there as an experience, and it is believed to bear testimony of God. But as this voice is experienced more as a law, a command, a reproach, than as an assent to well-doing, it does not serve as a magnet, drawing God into our hearts.

There are European poet-philosophers who have borne witness to the Higher Self, for instance, William Shakespeare, and also Johann Wolfgang Goethe, when he said, "Two souls, alas, reside in every heart." This "alas" is typical, as it again stresses the conflictoids, not the redemptive one.

The mystics, also our Christian mystics, have experienced the Divine Self, Atma, and tried to explain their Samadhi state, but the church-people do not understand their comments. They are inclined to believe that all these mystics are not quite normal, so that they better keep away from them.

In the New Testament, Jesus testifies to Self-realization with the statement: "I and my Father are one," and Saint Paul also explains his Self-realization in a way that Christian Church people should be able to grasp it. After having had the experience of Jesus Christ—whose adherents he had been persecuting—in the form of a dazzling Light in the Heavens, which made him lose his eye-sight for three days,—he declares, "Now it is no longer I who am living, it is the Christ who is living in me." Note that he does not say 'Jesus,' but the 'Christ,' with this denoting spiritual consciousness. In another passage he declares, 'I no longer live, I having been crucified and Christ having ascended in me.'

'Jesus' and 'Christ'

There would be a key to the mystery of Self-realization, if Christians made the

difference between Jesus, the son of man, as he called himself, and the Christ, the son of God. Jesus, the historical personality, a Sattwika, was a God realized saint sage. When he declared "Before Abraham existed, I was," he referred to Brahman pervading all, experienced by spiritual consciousness. Saint Paul calls it the indwelling Christ. It is only the name that differs. Once Jesus declared, teaching his disciples and nearest devotees, "I am the vine, you are the offshoots," meaning the vine to be Brahman and the shoots to be the Jivas.

But when Jesus said calling Himself the son of man—he would have to suffer and be crucified and resurrect on the third day, he spoke of his human appearance.

Like he, we should make the distinction between the two selves, but alas our Church-people keep sticking to the concept of the personal redeemer of separate individuals. This somewhat selfish relation to Jesus, the Saviour will ever bar the way to understanding what Self-realisation means.

#### Cocfused Thinking

Christians take this self to be our egotistic 'I,' our body and mind consciousness. When they read the word self-realisation in one of our esoteric books or papers, they say 'You are on a perfectly wrong track, facing a terrible temptation. Beware! this was Lucifer's self-cooeit. By your own personal efforts you watto attain a spiritual height youaim at becoming God. That is sacrifice. Only God and Jesus Christ can instil forces into us, by grace. We being imperfect men and sinners cannot do anything ourselves. Let us therefore be humble and expecting everything from the Lord.'

You see the continual confusion in all these statements.

There is another obstacle in approaching Self-realization, still heavier within the Catholic concept. When once I spoke to a catholic priest and lecturer about the Divine Revelation ever going on, so that one day we might also become saints, he was shocked and said. "Oh no, those were saints and we are none, and are not going to be either. Theirs means a special divine choice." Thus spoke an influential representative of the Catholic church.

Has he never pondered on the words of Jesus Christ, 'Be ye perfect, like as your Father in Heaven is perfect ?'

Evangelical Christians are also inclined to think that Saint Paul's illumination is a special case, not theirs. You see that at the base of the seemingly insurmountable difficulty, there is always the simple complex and the inherent accent on duality.

We Christians are continually stressing the two sides—good or bad—not in the sense of a necessary distinction, more in the sense of verdict, of a judgment and doom.

The Catholic Church goes in this respect, even further than the Evangelic one. The right of purgatory is elaborately being taken to account. It keeps the masses dependent upon the Church and its rituals, and it is a well paying factor of her revenue.

However, it is hard to live under a moral law kept up by frightened instead of being hacked by encouragement in view of an aspect towards liberation and light.

#### Need for a Changed Outlook

With really pure and devoted souls, the light is of course there in the form of the Lord's grace but these are few. The general Catholic outlook is more or less for the many who though not having left the Church, do not any longer go to confession and to communion and so cannot get ablation relief from sins. Besides

confession, as prescribed by the Catholic Church, is a sword with two blades. It can mean purification or blamish. Its fruit is dependent on the status of the priest banding it.

Vivekananda says somewhere that man do not advance by leaving an error and turning to truth, but that every step onward is a step from a lower concept or stage of truth to a higher truth. This base is the Vedantic one, and it is full of hope and illumination for all stages of evolution.

In another instance Vivekananda says "Why should we stress our faults and shortcomings knowing them all too well without them being specially mentioned?" Still there are people who only see errors in others, in the West and in the East. To them a tea-spoonful of Christian sin-powder might do good. For all the others, the Vedantic message and hope is the clarion call.

In spite of all that has been said, I see dawning, a change of attitude as regards this accentuation of failures and weakness. When the prison becomes unhesterable a door may open.

A great many intellectuals, students, scientists, doctors, artists and philosophers have left the Church, as they starved in it or became snuffed by its enmity, claims and contradictory statements. At

the same time there are voices inside the Church proclaiming that Christians must shift away from the cross and crucifixion to the fact of resurrection that they must free themselves from the latter, the authority of the word and the literal translation and interpretation and learn to understand symbols and allegories in the Bible.

Christians must find another, spiritual access to the significance of the cross, illustrating with its two beams, our upward, spiritual, introvert, and our outward going, extrovert, material tendencies. After having gone up along the straight, erected beam, we must centre in the middle, where the two beams meet, in the heart, the point of aquapuise of peace. There only is the Light.

A Swiss Christian painter has published some meditations on the cross in the above-cited direction and has by means of impressive paintings tried to show the inner spiritual evolution. These are hopeful signs for another religious trend.

Still I believe that Vedantic philosophy being scientific and based on spiritual experience, offers the maximum guidance and help for those who on one side have recognized the limits of sense-perception and intellect and who, on the other side, are trying to transcend the surrender-grace relation, though to some tempers, moments the latter may be more suitable.

## ON DISPENSATION

*Jesus said.*

He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man, the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowneth them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world... When bath ears to hear, let them bear.

—Matthew

**Chapter Thirteen**

**ISLAM**

# Islam

Sri Swami Sivananda

Islam is the name given by the Prophet of Arabia to the religion which he founded. Islam is an Arabic word which means peace. It means submission to the will of God. It means surrender, acceptance of the revelation and commands of God. The personal name of God is Allah. The aim of Mohamed's preachings was the establishment of the religion of one God, Allah. Islam is a religion of universal brotherhood like Theosophy. Firm, unwavering belief in one God is the essence of true religion according to Islamic faith. It makes no distinction between caste and caste and creed and creed.

"There is no God but Allah and Mohamed is the Messenger of Allah." This is the fundamental teaching of the Prophet of Islam. This is the cardinal tenet or doctrine of Islam. The religion of Islam is expressed shortly in this short formula. Mohamed preached the unity of God. He taught the love of God, respect for parents and the aged, reverence to women and a noble standard of life. Alms-giving or charity was a religious duty. He said, "Every good act is charity. Your smiling in your brother's face is charity. Putting a wanderer in the right path is charity."

The religion of Mohamed is based chiefly on Judaism and partly on Zoroastrianism. The Prophet has improved upon the Jewish religion in certain respects.

## Salient Features

The religion taught by the Prophet of Arabia is plain, simple and direct. The beauty of this religion is marred by the un-Islamic behaviour of some of the followers of Islam. It is clearly said in Quran, "No man is a true believer unless he desirereth for his brother that which he desires

for himself. God will not be affectionate to that man who is not affectionate to God's creatures. He is the most favoured of God, from whom the greatest good comes to His creatures. The best of men is he from whom good accrueth to humanity. All God's creatures are his family. He is most beloved by God who trieth to do more good to God's creatures. Feed the hungry and visit the sick and free the captive if he is unjustly confined. Asciat any person oppressed whether he is Muslim or non-Muslim. Love your fellow-helots first."

Islam recognizes brotherhood of man. A Muslim is expected to treat a non-Muslim as a brother and with as much generosity and friendliness as possible. Islam is a religion of service. The service of man and the good of humanity constitute the service and worship of God. The Prophet of Islam has said that the best of men is he who understands religion, who whose people stand in need of his services helps them. Some of the followers of Islam have not understood the spirit of Islam. They are not putting to practice the teachings of the Prophet. They do not live in the spirit of Islam. That is the reason why some people think that Islam stands for ideal opposed to co-operation, friendliness, brotherhood and communal harmony, that the religion which the Prophet of Islam gave to the world does not stand for peace, tranquillity and restlessness to the will of God and that it is a religion which was propagated by the sword and it spread through bloodshed and cruelty of every description.

Prophet Mohamed taught to the people more of ethics than deep philosophy, as they had no proper culture.

A Muslim believes in God, His Angels,

His books and His messengers, the last day, the resurrection from the dead predestination by God, good and evil, the judgment, the balance Paradise and Hell fire, the divine Inspiration of Mohamed, the origin of the Koran as divine inspiration, the future state. He is ready to enter into the religious war (Jihad) when so ordered by the divine as a religious duty.

The first principle of Islam is 'God has sent messengers to mankind throughout the ages to teach them that all messengers and all holy books are true thereby emphasizing the universality of faith.'

#### Five Cardinal Tenets

The five cardinal tenets of Islam are (1) Oneness of God and the revelation of God's will to man through a series of Prophets, the last of the series being Mohamed, (2) Prayer (Salat), (3) Fasting (4) Alms giving or charity (Zakat) and (5) Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca). These are the five pillars of Islam.

Prayer, fasting, Zakat or charity and pilgrimage to Mecca are rather the four duties or observances incumbent upon every Muslim. Hajj is compulsory only for those who can afford to travel to Mecca.

The sacred book of the Muslims is the Koran. This book deals with many different subjects: doctrines, morals, legal enactments, matters of State, manners and matters of private import. They have been collected into Surahs or chapters. To the Muslim it is the word of God eternal and uncreated conveyed to the Prophet in Arabic by the angel Gabriel. The Holy Koran is divided into 114 chapters. The word 'Surah' means literally eminence or high degree. The total number of verses is 6,247. The Koran was revealed bit by bit during a period of 23 years. Of the twenty three years over which the revelation of the whole book is spread thirteen

years were passed by Mohamed at Mecca and ten years at Medina.

Koran says "Any man may attain liberation by his faith and good actions."

Koran declares 'The flesh and blood of the animals that are sacrificed shall never reach God but your purity shall reach God. The flesh and blood of the animals you kill, shall not bring salvation for you.' Kill this ego. Serve the suffering humanity. Sacrifice your money, time, and energy in the service of the poor, the oppressed. This will give you salvation or freedom.

#### Fellowship and Tolerance

In Koran, the brotherhood of man and the equality of woman with man socially, economically and spiritually are emphasized. Man is a member of a great fraternity. Woman is the counterpart of man.

2½% of the earning of man must be spent in charity. It goes to the common public fund. It is for the purpose of helping the widows, the poor and the needy and the sick. It is utilized for digging wells, for the construction of rest houses, for the opening of schools and hospitals and other charitable purposes.

Selflessness and service are the ideals which a Muslim is enjoined to follow. The essence of Islam is the service of the suffering humanity. The sacred Koran says:

'Woe to those who pray who are nimbeful of their prayers, who make a show and release help to the needy.'

The Prophet of Islam also was a great lover of the doctrine of Ahimsa. Injuring people in any way or destroying any living creature is reprehensible. The holy Prophet says 'If one kills a sparrow, it will cry out to God on the day of resurrection, saying 'O my Lord! such and such a man killed me.' 'Do not shoot at things which have life.' He taught that men would be specially judged on the day of judgment.

with regard to their cruel treatment of dumb creatures.

Prophet has enjoined on his followers full and broad toleration of the views and beliefs of people other than their own. Koran says "Let there be no compulsion in religion."

The drinking of wine is prohibited. The taking of interest on loans is illegal.

There is no boundary line between Church and the State.

#### Simple and Practical Faith

There is no asceticism in Islam. The rigorous austere practices which cause torture to human body are strictly prohibited. What is wanted is a contrite heart, sincere repentance and serious continuous effort to avoid evil and practise virtue.

The Prophet was quite straightforward and frank. He never posed for a big world Teacher. When he reached Medina, the Arabs, the Christians and the Jews asked the Prophet "What is it that you wish to teach us?" The Prophet said "I want to teach you to believe in God, to believe in the divinity and the truth of God, of divine revelations that have been handed down to mankind by God. I want you to believe that every messenger and Prophet of God always brought a true message. I do not want you to regard me as a God. I am a man like any one of you. I am fallible. I am not infallible. I am capable of making mistakes. I do make mistakes. I want you to be kind to the poor and the weak. I want you to pray. I want you to give charity. I want you to be pure in your thoughts and conduct." This is what he told. The Arabs of Medina; the Christians and the Jews liked the Prophet, because he spoke in a way which appealed to them very much.

The great Muslim fast is that of Ramzan. It is a fast for one month. Eating and drinking is forbidden during the day, but are allowed at night.

Jihad is exerting oneself for the cause of religion. It is not taking part in war against unbelievers. Islam strictly prohibits application of force for its observance. There is no compulsion in religion.

#### Concept of Allah

Islam teaches that the followers should acquire the manifold attributes of Allah. No one can be a Muslim and none can attain Allah without acknowledging the essential truths of all religions.

Allah is the Protector of the universe. Allah is all-merciful. Allah is the Supreme Judge, who dispenses justice in accordance with the merits and demerits of the person. Allah is Rahim. Rahim is one who shows compassion and benevolence, for virtuous actions and noble virtues.

There is no such thing in Islam that a Muslim should fight in order that religion should live. Islam forbids fighting. Islam says "You shall not take up arms except in the cause of self-defence". In every sentence of the Koran, those who are tyrants have been told, "If you tyrannize over people, if you are cruel to them, you shall be punished."

Islam is a religion of peace. It is submission to the will of God. A true Muslim must be tolerant. Islam teaches that every religion is true. Islam teaches that God has sent Prophets and religious teachers to mankind to bring them to the path of goodness, to teach them the noble things of life, to be kind, to be noble, to be merciful, to be good and to be just. Islam teaches to regard not only human beings with kindness and tolerance, but also to treat animals with kindness.

#### Prayer

On Fridays, the Sabbath of Muslims' special prayers known as the Salat-Juma are offered at noon instead of the usual Salat-i-Zuhr. A sermon is delivered on this occasion.

Namez, the daily prayers of Muslim, has nowadays become a matter of formality.

The compulsory prayers (Salat) offered five times a day must be offered in congregation under the leadership of an Imam (religious leader).

Salat-i-Fajr is the morning prayer; Salat-t-Zuhr is noon prayer; Salat-i-Asr is evening prayer; Salat-i-Maghrib is sunset prayer; Salat-i-Asha is night prayer.

#### Sects

The descendants of Fatima, the daughter of Prophet Mohamed and Ali are known as Sayyids. Mohamed was succeeded as Caliph (successor) by Abu Bakr, Umar and Usman successively. The descendants of these first three Caliphs are called Shariks.

The Sunnis form the orthodox sect of Mohammedans. They believe in the Sunnat or tradition of the Prophet.

Hence their significant name. They uphold the succession of Abu Bakr, Umar and Usman.

Certain sections of Mohamed's followers claimed that the Prophet had during his life-time nominated Ali as his successor. They and their descendants known as the Shias have refused to recognize Abu Bakr, Umar and Usman as lawful Caliphs. The Shias have recognized 12 Imams, viz Ali, Hassao, eldest son of Ali, Hassao, etc. The Shias say that the Khilafat was hereditary and not elective.

The Wahabis are the followers of a reformer named Ahmad Wehab, who flourished in the 17th century. He condemned the keeping of relics and the visiting of graves and tombs of the saints. They are closely allied to the Sunnis.

#### On Marriage

Marriage among Muslims is a civil contract. Widows are allowed to re-marry. Divorcees also are allowed to re-marry.

Marriage is valid only if both the parties give full consent. A man is not allowed to have more than one wife, if he cannot treat his second wife with absolute equality.

Islam allows women to have equality with men. The daughter of a Mohammedan inherits the property of her father like her brother.

#### On Resurrection

The Muslims believe in the immortality of the Soul. There will be a day of resurrection when the dead will rise to receive the rewards and punishment of their deeds in life in accordance with their merits and demerits.

Man's body is consumed by the earth, save only the bone called Al Ajib (ramph bone or os coccygis). God will send rain for forty days, which will cover the earth to the height of 12 cubits and cause the bodies to sprout forth like plants.

The signs of resurrection are (1) The rising of the sun in the west, (2) The appearance of Dajjal, a monster who will preach the truth of Islam in Arabic language, (3) The coming of the Mehdi and (4) The blast of the trumpet called Sut, which will be sounded three times.

The soul will wait for fixed time. Then God will appear to judge them. Mohamed will take the office of intercessor. Then everyone will be examined regarding all his actions in this life. All the limbs and parts of the body will be made to confess the sins committed by each. A book in which all the actions are recorded will be given to each man. These books will be weighed in a balance held by Gabriel. Those whose good actions are heavier than the bad ones will be sent to heaven. Those whose evil deeds preponderate will be sent to hell.

Al Sirat is the bridge which is on the road to heaven. This bridge is thrown over

the abyss of hell. It is finer than a hair and sharper than the edge of a sword. The Mohomedans will easily pass over this bridge. Mohamed will lead them. The evildoers will soon miss their footing and fall down headlong into hell which is spitting between them.

After crossing the bridge Al Sirat, those who have done virtuous deeds will reach paradise which is situated in the seventh heaven. The paradise contains a beautiful garden. There are magnificent springs and fountains. There are rivers flowing with milk, honey and halsam. There are trees whose trunks are of gold. They produce the most delicious fruits. There are seventy beautiful girls called Hur-ul-ayun. They have big black eyes.

There are different torments in hell. The hell is divided into seven compartments. Al Hiraq is the partition which separates heaven from hell.

The Prophet of Islam taught of the great orders of Angels who carry out God's Will; four Archangels, Michael, the Angel who protects; Gabriel, the Angel who bears God's messages; Azrael, the Angel of death and Israfil, the Angel of the last trumpet.

#### Conclusion

At a time when Europe was covered in ignorance and darkness, the early Mussalmans kept alive the burning torch of

science and learning. They were thinkers, philosophers and seekers of knowledge. From the 8th century till the fourteenth of our era, the children of Islam were the torch-bearers in the West. Universities were established in Cairo, Baghdad, in Cordova in Spain. Christian Europe learnt its earliest lessons in science, in astronomy, in chemistry, in mathematics from the Mussalmans.

There have been in the history of Islam many women, who have contributed enormously not only to literature, but also to science. Read the history of the Arabs in Spain and Baghdad. You will be amazed to read therein that women have sat as High Court Judges, have written books and poems, have been scientists and mathematicians, have run schools and hospitals and had under their care, thousands of males of every age. They had no Purdah system. The Purdah system in India is of foreign growth. It had its origin in Greece. From Greece it went to Iran and from Iran it was brought by the early Mussalman invaders into Indis.

Such was the splendid development of the religion which the Prophet of Arabia founded. Its philosophical side too was very noble. It taught that all is from God, that there is no beauty in the world that is not His beauty, that there is no love in the heart of man that is not a breath of His love.

#### The Brightness

By the noon-day brightness,  
And by the night when it darkeneth,  
Thy Lord hath not forsaken thee, neither hath He hated thee,  
And sorely the future shalt he better for thee than the present,  
And thy Lord shall assuredly be bonitoons in thee and thou be satisfied.  
Did He not find thee an orphan and provide thee a home?  
And He found thee erring and guided thee,  
And found thee needy and enriched thee.  
As to the orphans therefore wrong him not;  
And as to him that asketh of thee, chide him not away;  
And as for the favours of thy Lord, tell them thee abroad.

(Translated from the Koran by J.M. Rodwell)

# Words of Islamic Wisdom

Collected by Sri Swami Sivananda

1. Prayer carries us half way to Allah; fasting taketh us to the door of His palace; charity gains us admittance.
2. Wrong not and ye shall not be wronged.
3. Do not follow up one look at a woman with another; for verily the first look is excusable but the next is unlawful.
4. The world and all things in it are valuable; but more valuable than all is a virtuous woman.
5. Admonish your wives with kindness, because women were created from a crooked bone of the sides. Therefore if you wish to straighten it, you will break it and if you let it alone, it will always be crooked.
6. He needs no other rosary whose thread of life is strong with beads of love, service, charity and renunciation.
7. Righteousness is not that you turn your faces towards the east or the west, but a righteous man is one who believes in God, the last day, the angels, the Book and the prophets, who does charity to the poor, who is steadfast in prayer.
8. To Allah belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He giveth life and He cansest to die. Apart from Allah ye have neither friend, nor helper.
9. Happy now the believers, who humble them in their prayer and who keep a cool from vain words, who do charitable acts, and who restrain their appetites.
10. Forgive thy servant seventy times a day.
11. Serve ye now but God. Show kindness to your parents, relatives, orphans and the poor. Be steadfast in prayer. Give alms.
12. God is the first and the last; the seen and the hidden. He knoweth all things. It is He, who in six days created the heavens and the earth, then ascended His throne. Wherever you are, He is with you. He sees all your actions.
13. Your God is one God, there is no God but He, the Merciful, the Compassionate.
14. God is the light of the heavens and the earth. His light is as a niche in which is a lamp and the lamp is in a glass, the glass is as though it were a glittering star.
15. God is the patron of them who believe. He brings them forth from darkness to light.
16. God is witness enough between me and you. Verily He is well aware of His servants and aess.
17. God it is who has made for you the night to repose therein and the day to see by. Verily God is Lord of Grace to men, but most men give no thanks.
18. Save God you have no patron and none to plead to you. Will you not then reflect?
19. Dost thou not see that God knoweth all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth? Three persons speak not together but He is their fourth; nor five but He is their sixth; nor fewer nor more, but wherever they may be He is with them. Then on the day of resurrection He will tell them of their deeds; because God knoweth all things.
20. Verily we are God's and verily to Him do we return.
21. Do good, because God loveth those who do good.

## Islamic Precepts

*[Selections from the "An-Nawawi," translated by Eric F F Bishop]*

Let there be no injury in the world, and no requital.

Actions are to be judged only in accordance with intentions.

What is lawful is obvious, and what is unlawful is obvious, and between them are matters which are ambiguous. Hence, he who is careful in regard to the ambiguous, has justified himself in regard to his religion and his honour.

Be in the world as if you were a stranger or a traveller. When the evening time comes, expect not the morning, and when the morning time comes, expect not the evening.

Do not be anxious of each other, and do not hate each other; do not oppose each other, and do not undersell each other.

Be abstemious in the world, and Allah will love you; he abstemious in what he longs to people, and people will love you.

Righteousness is goodness of character; righteousness is what the soul and the heart feel tranquil about.

Alms-giving is incumbent upon every "bone" of people, each day that the sun rises. A good word is alms-giving, and in every step you walk towards prayer there is an act of alms-giving, and it is alms-giving when you ward danger off the road.

A man said to the Prophet, "Give me a command." He said, "Do not get angry." The man repeated the question several times, and the Prophet said, "Do not get angry."

Purification is a part of religion; and prayer is light, and alms-giving is a proof; patience is brightness, and the Koran is an argument in your favour or against you.

Leaving alone things which do not concern him is one of the good things in a man's Islam.

No one is a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.

He that believes in Allah, let him speak good, nor hold his peace, let him honour his neighbour, and let him honour his guest.

## The Gospel of Islam

Sri Gauthi Prasad  
(Retired. Judge Sircayashram)

### Introduction

The world abounds with scriptures, with revelations, with religions, philosophies, sects and systems.

To these, many minds of half-ripe-knowledge or no-knowledge-at-all attach themselves with exclusiveness and passion and will assert with all the vehemence at their command that this or the other book alone is the eternal word of God, and all others are either impostures or at least imperfectly inspired, that this or that philosophy is the last word of the reasoning intellect,

or that the other systems are either errors or contain only such partial truth in them as to link them only as auxiliary to the one true philosophical coil. To such bigoted and vainglory even the wise have often lent themselves, misled perhaps by some spirit of darkness which has mingled with their light and overshadowed it with some cloud of totalistical egotism or spiritual pride.

Fortunately mankind seems now so-closed to grow a little more tolerant and wiser and we are becoming now ready to

search for the truth which we admit is everywhere and not our own sole monopoly.

But we are still apt to consider or even to decide that our truth gives us the supreme knowledge which other religions or philosophies have either missed altogether or only imperfectly grasped, and in that attitude of mind, we are still prone to force upon ourselves or on others that the whole sacred mass of the Book or Gospel we admire, shall be accepted as eternally valid truth and no iota or underline or diathesis denied its part of the plenary inspiration.

No doubt we have, first of all, to admit and acknowledge that there is a Truth one and eternal which we are seeking, from which all other truths derive, by the light of which all other truths find their right place, explanation and relation in the entire schema of knowledge; but precisely for that reason it cannot be found in its entirety in any single philosophy or scripture or uttered altogether and forever by any one teacher, thinker, prophet or Avatar.

Next we have also to bear in mind that though this truth is one and eternal, still it expresses itself in time and through the mind of man. Therefore every scripture must necessarily contain two elements: one temporary and perishable, belonging to the ideas and conditions of the period and the country in which it was produced, and the other eternal and imperishable and applicable in all ages and countries.

We may therefore say at the outset that we propose by our very brief study of the religion of Islam and the Holy Quran to seek in them such cardinal principles in that one and eternal Truth which are of permanent value to the whole mankind.

#### A Religion of Humanity

*Islam*: The Arabic word "Islam"

means submission to the will of God. It is employed to denote both the Muhammadan religion and the Mohammeden world. The present note is concerned with the *Islamic Faith* and not with the Islamic State.

'Creed': The Islamic Creed is expressed in the brief formula or "Kalmah" which runs thus:-

"There is no God save God; Mohamed is the Apostle of God." The implication of the first portion of the "Kalmah" is that God is one and unique in His Essence; the qualities of the divine nature are enumerated at length in the Holy Quran, but the heresy most dreaded is that of the "shirk" i.e., giving to God a partner.

In fact, the exposition of the Being of God is so set forth in the Holy Quran as to leave no doubt about His absolute unity and supremacy. In such an aspect of the Supreme Being—the Absolute One—Islam may be looked upon as the religion of Humanity. According to the Holy Quran itself, the true religion of Islam, viz., "The doctrine of Tawheed" did not originate from the revelations and preachings made by the Holy Prophet Mohamed, but it was as well the religion of the Prophet that went before him, a.g., Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus. It was indeed the religion of every prophet of God who appeared in any part of the world.

In other words, it was the natural religion of mankind. But before we attempt to exposit the doctrine of Tawheed (the Blessed Oneness) on which the whole Islamic faith is based, let us give very briefly a historic view of the background of the birth of the religion of Islam.

#### Birth of Islam

It was the seventh century of the Christian era. The influence of Judaism

and of Christianity had penetrated into the deserts of Araria and had mixed and mingled with the native culture of which the holy place Mecca offered a good example. The people of Mecca Sherif were proud of the descent from Abraham and they worshipped at their temple, which they claimed had been founded by Abraham himself. This Kabah (the House of Allah) existed long before the days of Mohamed.

It was at Mecca Sherif that the holy prophet was born. It was at Kahah that he worshipped long years before his vision and his mission.

In order to show that every prophet is a reformer and a protestant in active life, it is necessary to draw attention to the fact that many people of Mecca Sherif and among them Mohamed himself, were dissatisfied with the social and religious corruption prevalent at that time. A number of stone idols had been erected at the Kahah. It did not belong to the Quraish hut was the common pantheon of many tribes and contained no less than 360 idols and these were known as intercessors between man and God and were called the "Daughters of God."

A reaction against this religious corruption had set in and many good and studious men had given up formalism in religion and were seeking Truth. They did, however, recognize that within themselves were Light, Guidance and Inspiration. Among them was young Mohamed—a Hanif, i.e., belonging to this growing band of enquirers known as Hunafa. It is thus noteworthy that, born and brought up in orthodoxy, Mohamed had revolted. He had, however, obtained a good social status through his marriage with Khadijah a wealthy widow who had employed him as a merchant who looked after her interest so well and worthily that his own conduct

earned for him the title of *Al-Amin*, (the Trustworthy). So young Mohamed was already known as *Al-Amin—an' honest, sincere man—and also as Hanif prior to his first vision.*

Now Mohamed in his search for religious Truth used to retire with his family for one month every year to a desert-hill near Mecca, known as *Hira* now world-famous, for it was at this place that the first message was heard by Mohammed about the year 610 A.D. In that retreat Mohammed fasted and prayed, holding communion with his own soul on Mount Hira. While in such a communion, it is reported that Angel Gahrel showed himself to Mohammed and said: "O' Mohamed, Thou art Allah's messenger (Rasool) and I am Gahriel." It was in the month of Ramzan on the night of the 25th or 27th which is known as Laylatul Qadr that this revelation was made to him. Somewhat disconcerted and in mortal distress, for he may have not approved of such psychic intercourse, Mohamed came to his wife Khadijah and related the vision; her reassurances, however, gave him self-confidence. On their return to Mecca she took him to a very old and holy man by the name of Varga bin Nawfal who knew the scriptures of the Jews and Christians. That old man declared that the heavenly messenger who had come to Moses had now come to Mohammed. Thus assured, Mohammed took his mission seriously and earnestly commenced to labour as the Apostle of God.

#### The Holy Quran

Thereafter Mohamed began to receive divine messages with recurring frequency; they were remembered by him and got recorded as the word of God. Thus was created what came to be known as the Holy Quran—the recitations—the sacred

scriptural of the faith of Islam. In this form it has come down to us, it represents the recension of the text which was issued in the regime of Usman, about 20 years after the death of the Prophet. But Muslim and non-Muslim scholars are in agreement that the text of the recension substantially corresponds to the actual utterances given by the Prophet of the revelations made to him from time to time, spreading over an aggregate period of 23 years.

The name "Al-Qur'a" the sacred book of the Muslim occurs several times to the Book itself. The word Quran as a noun is derived from the root "qura's" meaning primarily he 'collected together' and also "read and recited"; and the Book is so called because the revelations made to the Prophet Mohamed were collected together and recited by him.

#### Divine Revelation

While on this incident of Divine Revelations to the holy Prophet, it may be stated here that the second fundamental principle of the faith of Islam is a belief in the *Universal Divine Revelation*, not only as a belief in the truth of the revealed word of God as found in the Holy Quran, but a belief in the truth of Divine Revelation in all ages and to all nations of the world, a belief which will remind the Hindus of the saying in the Gita: "Whenever righteousness declines and unrighteousness rises up, do I create myself to the world for the protection and upholding of the good and destruction of the evil—from age to age—a descent of Godhead in man." (Gita IV.7 & 8)

In Islam Divine Revelation to mankind is said to be of three kinds:

The first of these is called "Izhae." It spiritualizes the inspiring of an idea into the heart.

The second mode of God's revelation is said to be from behind a veil and this

includes "Ruiya" (dream), "Kosh" (vision), and "Ilham" (when voices are heard or uttered as in a state of trance).

The third kind which is special to the prophets of God is that in which the Angel (Gabriel) brings the Divine Message in expressed language or word.

But before we proceed further to consider the teachings of the Holy Quran let us pause and reflect on these particular incidents in the life of the Holy Prophet of receiving Divine Messages.

#### Mohamed's Meditations

As we reflect we get two object-lessons of primary universal importance of eternal value from them. One, the efficacy of silent meditation, which has been poetically called "the tongue of the Soul" and "the language of the Spirit."

This process of the communion of the soul with the Supreme or Cosmic Soul really consists of drawing forth quality after quality, power after power, from the spiritual depth of one's own nature in which they all lie latent. During meditation, in utter stillness of the outer mind, the results of this interior process of meditation are received by the waking consciousness. Strengthened and illuminated, the mediator or Yogi-saint makes them increasingly manifest in his daily life. He begins to see himself as the centre of the Will of God in the outer world, helping mankind to overcome its weaknesses by his own growing self-mastery.

#### Self-Realization

This power of self-unfolding, of inner enrichment and illumination not only enables him to establish his own consciousness in the everlasting, all-pervading, Divine (Atmic) Power, but keeps him by his meditation continuously in touch our union with that Supreme Power. Thereafter, all his activities in the outer world are thus directed by that Higher Power, and he becomes a true

"Rasool" or Prophet of God Another important point of no less importance from which we should take an object lesson from the life of Prophet Mohamed is that this regular retreat of his to Hira for meditation and Self realization was neither an orthodox injunction with him, nor was it imposed upon him by anybody. He had no Shaikh or Pir, so far as we know, to guide him in that respect.

It was entirely his own inner urge which impelled him to go into meditation and seek that communion of the soul. Unless there is that inner urge of the soul, no contemplation or meditation can bring any good results and much less any spiritual vision or self-unfoldment.

And, if we study some other recorded incidents of his life, we will have some idea of his greatness not only on the moral and ethical planes, but also on the spiritual plane of life. They will reveal to us on the one hand, his steadfast and unshakable faith in his divine Mission, and his honesty of purpose and intensity of motive in carrying them out undaunted on the other, they will show how meek and humble, compassionate and merciful, tolerant and forgiving he was by disposition towards all, irrespective of their caste or creed.

One day the Prophet went to Kabah, preached his sermon and declared that there was no God, but Allah. This open proclamation of the unity of God, was taken by the idol-worshippers as the greatest insult to their Gods and Goddesses. A tumult ensued and they attacked the Prophet. One of the followers who intervened to save him was cut to pieces by swords, and it was with great difficulty, that the Prophet could be rescued. The prosecution which followed was terrible. His followers fled to other parts of the country Abn Tellh, his own uncle, pressed

Mohamed to abandon his mission, but Prophet stood adamant. He bore with immense patience the persecution of his tormentors.

#### Tolerance and Patience

His perseverance in the face of what appeared to others as insurmountable difficulties arrested the attention and touched the heart of those who had not been hardened in their wicked ways. His tolerance and the great patience with which he nobly bore his merciless persecution began to win over people and attract them to him. The Prophet thus demonstrated by his own conduct, in the face of several trials, how efficacious and captivating the power of suffering for a righteous Divine Cause could be. This characteristic devotion of the Prophet to the Mission had a deep spiritual significance of universal import to the whole mankind.

It revealed how by his unshaken faith in the Supreme Being and by his steadfastness to carry out, at all risks, the divine mission which he had received so clearly he was able to create such a mighty consciousness of the Will of God that it swayed not only the destiny of those who came into contact with him but the destiny of all his land and people. These and other known incidents of the life of the Prophet further reveal that his consciousness was firmly established on high spiritual and ethical grounds of a fundamentally universal character.

For instance when one day Mohamed Sahih was engaged in talking in the Kabah to an influential rich man with the object of winning him over to Islam, there turned up suddenly a blind men from the desert by the name of Abdulla; he said: "O prophet of God, teach me the way of Salvation." Mohamed said: "Please do not disturb me, I am busy with a very important matter." Abdulla felt greatly

disappointed and went away. The same night Mohamed Sahib had a vision. In that vision the archangel Gabriel came and rebuked Mohamed for his conduct to refuse to hear the blind man. This admonition is recorded in the Holy Quran. The verses describe how he who was the messenger of God would not hear the blind man who needed his help, but would scold him instead of talking to the rich man. Mohamed Sahib had the strength of character to expose his own mistake and declare that "By no means shouldst thou act thus."

### Introspection

Subsequently, Mohamed Sahib went out in search of that blind man, found him out, cried bitterly and asked for his pardon. He concluded that like any other man he was liable to err. That blind man Ahdullah was twice honored by being made Governor of Medina. This incident shows how the Prophet had developed his power of introspection and thereby making rapid spiritual progress in Self-realization.

Two other cardinal principles which governed the conduct of the life of the Prophet were prayer and fasts. Each of these has got only so ethical but spiritual value of a universal and permanent nature.

### Remembrance of God

We know that the Prophet would constantly remain at prayers. In fact, it was through prayers that he sought his guidance in daily life from Allah—God. Prayer, the Holy Quran says, is the true means of the purification of the heart, which is the only way to hold communion with God. "Recite that which has been revealed to you of the book, and be constant at prayer, for prayer restrains a person from that which is evil and indecent, and the remembrance and glorifying of God is certainly a great thing." (Ch. 29. 45).

Rememberance or consciousness of a living belief in Divine Power, Knowledge and Goodness is a most potent factor to restrain a man from committing sin and Mohamed Sahib had developed it to such an extent that all his daily activities in life were directed by it. He insisted on his followers to keep up at prayers not as a matter of ritual, but to put their whole heart into it. His own prayers were expressly denominated by the Holy Quran: "Work to those who are heedful of their prayers and who only make a show of it." (Ch. 107, 4 and 5). Prayer without a living faith in the presence of God is an impossibility; a heart-felt prayer is not a mere recitation with the lips. It is yearning from within of the heart to be one with the Creator, an invocation for His blessings.

Whether the prayer is petitional or so inward communion of the soul with the Supreme Soul, the result is the same in either case. Even when it is petitional, it should be the petition for the cleansing and purification of the heart and mind, for freeing them from the layar of ignorance and darkness that envelop them. Prayer is not so asking. It is a longing of the soul. It is a daily admission of our weakness, of an utter insignificance, a perpetual reminder of our nothingness to the vast world of death, disease, old age and accidents.

### Fasting

Another characteristic feature of the Holy Prophet's life was his keeping fast regularly for a whole month of Ramzan. In fact, as stated above, it was during one of this fasting month of Ramzaan that he started receiving his Divine Revelations.

Now, fasting not only helps a person to keep physically fit and healthy, but also helps in developing the moral and ethical virtues of moderation and self-restraint. Self-control and self-restraint is a sure

guard against evil, and this has a spiritual value of its own. So the Holy Quarn says: "O, you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed before you, so that you may guard against evil." (Ch. II. 23 183)

Other traits of nobility of character which he displayed throughout his life were his meekness, simplicity, a generous charitable disposition ever ready to forgive and forget, and a truly loving heart to sympathize and share the suffering of others round about him. After this very brief study of the sublimity of his character and guiding principles of his life, let us have a glimpse of some of the revelations which he directly received from God and which he gathered together and got recorded in the Holy Quarn for the good of mankind in general and for the Muslim-world in particular.

It has already been stated in the very beginning that the implication of the first portion of the Kalmah is that God is One and unique in His Essence. The whole Islamic faith is built on the great doctrine of "Tawheed"—The Blessed Oneness. Throughout the whole of the Holy Quran emphasis has been laid over and over again on the Unity of God.

Now let us reflect on this basic faith of Islam—Tawheed—and bring to our mind and comprehend the different evolutionary stages which could lead one to arrive at the happy end.

#### Basic Faith

First of all we should have the strongest faith or Sraddha in the oneness of God

Then there should be the striving or seeking of that Great and Eternal Truth,—E-kam Sat, in every phase of life.

Thirdly there should, as a result of that striving, be an awakening in us, a consciousness that all that is visible or invi-

sible is pervaded and permeated by that One Supreme Spirit.

Fourthly that Cosmic Consciousness should so dominate our own individual consciousness or ego, that no trace of that individual ego be left traceable. When this final stage is reached one is apt to declare "Mun tau shudam tau man shudi," (I am in You and You are in me)—Aham Brahmasmi of the Vedic Seers—the Final Liberation or Moksha of the Vedantin.

For the attainment of this last stage a long process of training is required, but instances of this kind were not wanting in Muslim world. In fact, it is stated that the great Muslim Mystic Hallaj (who was put to death in Baghdad in 912) claimed to have attained that union with God and final identification with him.

In one of his poems he says:

"I am He Whom I love and He whom I love is I.  
We are two spirits dwelling in one body.  
If thou seest me thou seest Him.  
And if thou seest Him, thou seest us both."

#### Conception of God

The attributes of God as given in the Holy Quran are:

That God is not the God of this or that nation.

He is the Lord of the worlds (Rabb-ul-Aalim)

He is Allah (the Supreme Being) beside whom there is none other who should be served.

He is Al-Wahid or Ahad (the One). Al-Hayy (the Ever-living), Al-Qayyim (the Self-subsisting), Al-Ghani (the Self-sufficient), Al-Awwal (the First), Al-Aakhir (the Last), Al-Quddus (the Holy), As-Samad (on Whom all depend and He depends not on any) Al-Haqq (the Truth).

As Creator, He is Al-Khaliq (the Creator), Al-Bari (the Maker of the Soul), Al-

Musawwir (the Fashioer of shapes and forms), Al-Badi (Wonderful Originator).

In regard to His Lore and Mercy, He is Al-Rauf (the Affectionate), Al-Wadud (Loving-Kind), Al-Latif (the Benign), Al-Tawwab (the oft-returning to mercy), Al-Halim (the Forbearing), Al-Atiyyah (the Pardoner), Ash-Shakur (the Multiplier of rewards) As-Salam (the Author of Peace), Al-Mu'aim (the Granter of security), Al-Muhammam (the Guardian over all), Al-Jabbar (the Restorer of every loss), Al-Barr (the Benign), Rafigh darajat (the Exalter of ranks), Al-Wafi (the Ample-giving), Al-Wahhab (the great Giver), Ar-Razzaq (the Bestower of sustenance).

In relation to His Glory, Power and Greatness, He is Al-Azim (the Great), Al-Aziz (the Mighty), Al-Qadir or Mqadir (the Powerful), Al-Aliyah or Mutul (the High), Al-Qawiyy (the Strong), Al-Qahhar (the Supreme), Al-Mutakabbir (the Possessor of every greatness), Al-Kabir (the Great), Al-Karim (the Generous), Al-Hamid (the Praised), Al-Majid (the Glorious), Al-Matin (the Strong), Az-Zahir (Ascendant over all).

In relation to His Knowledge or Jnana, He is Al-Alim (the All-knowledge), Al-Hakim (the All-wise), Al-Khabir (the Aware), As-Sami (the All-hearing), Al-Basseer (the All-seeing), Ash-Shahid (the Witness), Al-Batin (the Knower of all hidden things and secrets).

In relation to His Control of things, He is Al-Wakil (having all things in His charge), Al-Waliyy (the Guardian), Al-Hafiz (the Protector), Al-Malik (the Sovereign), Al-Maslik (the Master), Al-Fattah (the Supreme Judge), Al-Hasth (the Great Accountant), Al-Mootaqim (the Great Collector of Retribution).

We thus see that the conception of God as indicated by His Divine attributes is similar to that given or enmeshed in the

Hindu scriptures, of the Saguna-Brahman. Even His immanent and transcendental nature has not been omitted. It is mentioned in the Holy Quran that Divine attributes are not to be explained by reference to anything upon earth; nor the nature of man, for there is nothing whatsoever which resembles God.

#### *Quran: A Book of Moral Codes*

It is impossible here to mention even all the varied contents of this Holy scripture. Besides comprising the aforesaid theological dogmas as to the nature of God's existence, His attributes, His creative activity, His relation in mankind, especially in connection with His ailing Prophets from time to time to reveal in men the truth as to the proper object of their worship and their duties towards God and in due season, insistence is laid upon right faith, right conduct and repentance of sin. Special emphasis is laid on the day of resurrection on which Almighty God will judge His creatures according to the actions done in this life. The Holy Quran says:

"And we will set up a just balance on the day of Judgment, so no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the least, and though there be the weight of a grain of mustard seed yet we will bring it up and sufficient are we to take account (XXI. 47)." This in substance resembles the Karma theory of the Hindus.

Thus, performance of good works is not only insisted upon but emphasis is laid on the fulfilment of the specific obligations of Islam some of which are embodied in the following passage in which right conduct receives the same emphasis as right belief: "There is no piety in turning your face towards the east or the west but he is pious who believeth in God, last day, and the Angel and the Scripture, and for the love of God disburseth his wealth to the

kindred, to the orphans, to the needy, to the wayfarer and those who ask and for ransomings, who observeth prayers and prayeth the legal alms, and who is of those who are faithful to the agreements after entering into those agreements" (II 172)

*Here the virtues of charity, patience and the fulfilment of promises are given as important a place as loyalty to the true faith*

Among the other ethical duties upon which emphasis is laid in the Holy Quran are kindness and gratitude towards parents and one of the traditions of the Prophet declares that Paradise lies at the feet of mother, the care of the orphan, the payment of debts, and forgiveness of offenders.

Several rules are laid down for behaviour in society, e.g., no house should be entered without first asking permission and saluting the inmates (XXIV, 27), a greeting should receive a courteous response (IV 88), in social intercourse rules of politeness should be observed (XII, 55 & II 77).

#### **Islamic Creed According to Quran**

From the above brief survey of the various aspects of the *faith of Islam* as recited in the Holy Quran, it would appear that the Muslim theologians erected the fabric of the dogmas of the creed on its basis and they are practically all agreed in including among the articles of the faith, which every true Muslim must accept the following:

- 1 Belief in God and in His Oneness,
- 2 In His Angels,
- 3 In His revealed Book,
- 4 In His Apostles
- 5 In the Resurrection and the Day of Judgment, and
- 6 In His predestination of good and evil

#### **Mohamed—An Apostle of God**

Whatever be the attitude of a modern Muslim or non Muslim towards the faith of Islam as a creed, one cannot but express one's genuine belief in Mohamed as an Apostle of God Who else but a true Prophet of God, though born and brought up in that dark age of social and religious corruption in Arabia invoke God's guidance in that exquisite prayer with which the Holy Quran opens? That Surah Fatiha or Al-Fatiha, which has ever since formed an integral part of the daily devotion of the Muslim world runs thus:

"In the Name of God, the Beneficent  
the Merciful  
(All) Praise be to God, the Lord of the  
worlds,

The Compassionate, the Merciful  
Master of the Day of Judgment  
To Thee do we worship and to Thee do we  
hersch for help  
Guide us to the straight (right) path  
The path of those to whom Thou art  
gracious,  
Not of these to whom Thou art angered,

Nor of these who go astray"

An exact replica of the Great Gayatri Mantra of the Vedic period!

Who but a true Prophet of God could display, in that spiritually dark period of Arabs, such power of Self-realization which as the history has shown was world-wide and world-deep in its effect on ethical and spiritual planes?

#### **Object-Lesson of the Islamic Faith**

It is impossible to study any vital subject which affects the well-being of people in general, without perceiving the intimate relation between the individual and the human race to which he belongs. In fact, there is a deeper and truer view of heredity than is generally perceived and accepted, and it reveals that a man not only inherits tendencies

and characteristics from his parents, but that he is heir to the capacities, to the deficiencies, to the virtues and vices of the race and the country in which he is born.

Our Muslim brothers all over the world are heir to that great and noble legacy of Islam, which the Great Prophet Mohamed of Arabia and his successors Ali and others have left them. Similarly, it should not be forgotten that our Muslim brethren here and in Pakistan have imbibed the influence and culture of this most ancient land.....the Bharatavarsha.....and many of the Hindus of this land, after embracing the great faith of Islam have accepted the creed of Allah. We have to remember that the way of life taught by prophets, saints and sages, all the world over is precisely the realization that humanity is essentially spiritual. It is not composed of mere bodies... black, white, yellow and brown, male and female. Humanity is not composed merely of minds—scientific, artistic, philosophic and political. Essentially humanity is composed of souls—every soul a divine spark, the whole humanity being animated by the same universal divine energy. All religious prophets have taught us that God (Allah, Brahma) is Omnipresent and dwells in the heart of all of us, but we do not realize the implication of that stupendous fact, the spiritual identity of all souls with that one Supreme Soul, call it Allah, Paramatman, Ahura Mazda, Christ or the Universal Spirit. This line of thought must show us that we have in us a Divine Power to wield a weapon with which to destroy the evil and the weakness in us. This process of eradicating evil in us, of transmuting the lower and the animal self is the aim and object of all religious teachings.

In this connection, we have to remember that there are two selves in each one of us; the lower and the higher. It is the lower self which is to be rejected and

destroyed, or rather transformed into higher self. In our normal consciousness as ordinary human beings, there are two strata—the lower representing evil, and the higher Good—Iblis, and Allah.

The Holy Quran says: 'Whosoever ye turn there is the face of Allah (II 109)' Every man, Hindu or Muslim, Christian or Jew, has within him the Light, Nur, of Allah; there are no Kafirs in the Kingdom of God, but there is an infidel, a Kafir, in each one of us, and when we are caught by the evil in us, we break the law of nature, which is Sat or Truth; and we become an infidel.' When a Hindu, Muslim, Christian or other lies or hates or when he hates or drinks, he is an infidel and so with all, irrespective of creed or religion. Thus each one of us is divine and demoniac—a mixture of good and evil.

Our lower propensities, and bad habits, which from time to time overpower us are our lower selves and that aspect of our being which is pure and loving, chaste and serene is the Divinity in us. Within our brain are cavities which modern science finds empty and there are tiny glands whose functions are unknown to science, but the ancients knew it. The alchemists of Islam, the Sufi-mystics knew it. The power and light of our divine, spiritual and Higher Self falls into our brain-cavities and chambers of the heart-like lightning and kindles and energizes them.

The method of doing it was demonstrated by the Prophet Himself; by curbing, purifying of lower or personal-self and by energizing and kindling the higher Self by prayer, fasting, going into meditation and by showing tolerance, mercy, compassion and love to others. His was a dynamic and spiritual way of life which brought to men of Arabia and the whole Muslim world new vision leading them to the recognition of their own Divinity, energizing them to love and serve their fellow men.

# On Islamic Culture

Sri G.S.A. Karim Sohrawardy

[Retired Inspector-General of Police, Madras]

India has been the land of many religions, cults and civilizations. She has evolved a harmony out of them. To many ancient religions, India is the land of birth, and to many others she is the land of adoption. She has honoured them all alike, with her matriarchal benediction. The religions and cults that came seeking her were welcomed and maintained by her with her traditionally noble hospitality. She embraced them with a motherly affection; she absorbed and assimilated many of their virtues. She even got herself surnamed by them as "India," "Hind," etc., though her own name was and is Bharatavarsha.

Islam, like Christianity, which came from abroad, found in India a congenial soil for growth and expansion. The great treasures and virtues of the Islamic cult were imbibed by her largely in the several centuries of her association with it. The Islamic culture greatly influenced her life, thought and action. Islam gave us a new philosophy, a new culture, and a new civilization. Our art, literature and poetry were enriched by the Islamic influence, and its great legacy to us is the architecture which shines even today as the pride and glory of India. The greatest message that Islam delivered to India is the message of brotherhood and equality between man and man, equality and fraternity being the very essence of Islamic religion.

### One Reality

The assimilation of different religions, cultures, and civilizations has enriched our life, effecting harmony, tolerance, mutual sympathy and goodwill among the people, whatever be the religious faiths they belonged to. There prevailed a unity in diver-

seity, and a beauty in realization of the fundamental unity of all religions. Each religion proclaims in its own way the omnipotence, omniscience and omnipotence of the Supreme Being who is the same in all religions. The sacred Islamic formula *La Ilaha Illallah*, proclaiming the supremacy of Allah, and the sacred Gayatri Mantra of *Om bhoor bhuva svaha*, proclaiming the greatness of Bhagavan, all ring the same note about the Supreme Lord. The terms, *Allah* and *Bhagavan*, though different, because of the difference in languages in which they are expressed, are both synonyms of the same Supreme Being, which is universal.

It is the realization of the oneness of God that is the heart of the celebrated prayer-song of Mahatma Gandhi, that is, the *Ram-dhun* song of "Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram," which brings out with emotion the fundamental truth that *Iswarn* and *Allah* are one and the same.

### Religious Harmony

The said prayer-song so loved and liked by the Mahatma does not attempt at creating for the first time the religious harmony in us. But it only puts, in a melodious and moving way, the religious harmony already existing in our land. Who can dare to deny the existence of this religious concord in the life of our people? There are several castes in our land, shunning even today as sacred shrines of that religious harmony. The great shrines at Ajmere, Delhi, Agra, Panipath, Trichioopoly, Nagore, and scores of other places, are a glorious example of unity and religious toleration among the masses of different religious persons. At these places, people in thousands congregate, making no distinctions of castes,

colour and creed. A similar religious unity is found in other shrines in Goe and Velanganni in Tanjore District, where the Church receives a majority of its pilgrims from among the Hindus.

Are we not witnessing that harmony and tolerance right now here, and at this very spot (Parliament of Religious Convention)? Are not we, of different religious faiths and persuasions participating with pride and pleasure in this gathering? In such gatherings we read unity. In such unity lies our strength the strength of the one family of God. Of different religious faiths though we are, we are one and the same, bound in loyalty by the common nationality and the common unity.

#### A Civilization By Itself

The common people are generally of the impression that the religion of Islam is primarily a system of theology coupled with the person of the Prophet and his teaching as embodied in the Koran and his Sayings. But Islam is something more than this. It is a civilization by itself. It is an embodiment of true culture with distinctive features in social, economic, political and intellectual structures. It covers a multitude of people of different races and national traditions, and yet linked together in a harmonious bond. There is yet another distinctiveness about the geographical position of the Muslims in the world. It extends along the Atlantic sea-coast of the West Africa through Sudan, southern coasts of the Mediterranean Sea, Egypt and Western Asia and by the shores of the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea into Siberia and eastwards to Mongolia down the East African Coast to the Island of Madagascar, and across the mountain ranges of Afghanistan into the plains of India then from India to Malayan Peninsula and extending across East Indian Archipelago, till it ends in the

south of the Philippine Islands. Outside these zones, isolated areas are found in the western frontiers of China and in South Africa.

If you make out a special map of Islamic countries in the world it will look like two huge crescents with horns radiating from one centre in Western Asia. There are 270 to 280 millions of Muslims in these lands. They are more than the population of the western hemisphere, i.e., North and South America put together. Of these over 100 millions are in India and Pakistan 50 millions in Indonesia, about 40 millions in Western Asia, about 20 millions in China and Siberia, over 50 millions in Africa where they exceed by many times the followers of all other organized religions put together and in fact they are one third of the population of the continent of Africa. There are also several millions of Moslems in Europe, particularly in the Balkan States and Turkey. It is this position of Islam in the world which at one time was looked upon by the European powers as a Pan Islamic danger. In spite of the followers of Islam being scattered so widely and diversely in various lands, the one astonishing feature is that despite so many factors which create divisions, such as customs, habits, rituals and thoughts pertaining to their own locality, the uniformity of its civilization and outlook of life remains unshaken through all these years.

In a wider sense, the Koran often repeats that Islam is the religion of every prophet who came down to this earth with the Word of God. So it is at once both oriental and occidental in its outlook, culture and service. It embraces in its fold everyone who believes in the oneness of God and the mission of God's Prophet. It recognizes the prophets of other faiths wherever they may have served humanity.

with the Word of God. In order to promote intercourse among its followers and the rest of humanity, it has introduced a system of daily prayer-meeting, at least five times a day in their own locality once a week in a central place in their two towns, and once a year at Mecca, the birth place of Islam. This was instituted with a view to strengthen the unity among Muslims and fraternity and cordiality with their neighbours. The institution of the celebration of the Prophet's birthday once a year is another agency designed to promote the common bond of spiritual intercourse not only between the followers of Islam but also between peoples of other faiths and persuasions, so that the flame of fraternity, kindled by the great Prophet may be kept burning through all ages.

#### Meaning of Islam

Islam literally means 'surrender,' surrender to the Will of God.—Peace Islam is the name by which the religion preached by the Prophet Mohamed who appeared in Arabia over 1300 years ago, is known. Islam is commonly known as "Mohammedanism," a name adopted in imitation of such names as Christianity and Buddhism but quite unknown to the Muslims themselves. Our claim is that the religion of Islam is as wide in its conception as humankind itself. It is a League of many nations. It did not have its birth from the teaching of our Prophet. On the other hand it was equally the religion of the prophets who went before him. Islam is thus the religion of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and the hosts of other Prophets who preached the Word of God to men in various parts of the world, from time to time.

Islam is not meant for one people, one age, one country. It requires that the faithful should believe that all the great religions of the world were revealed by

God, and as such it lays down the basis of peace and harmony with other faiths. It is a historical faith, and its founder is a historical character. Every act of the founder is open to scrutiny to the light of history, and the Holy Koran has stood the historical test of thirteen and half centuries, and I may also mention that in Islam, deeds are as essentially a component part of religion as belief. You will therefore appreciate the fact that the teaching of Islam is not abridged in maxims and stories. The subject is somewhat comprehensive and I shall confine myself to the following aspects of it only: brotherhood of man and service of humanity, freedom of conscience, reverence to authority, position of women in Islam, Islam's attitude towards gambling, promiscuity, luxury, charity and labour.

#### Brotherhood of Man

At a time like the one we are passing through when human society is largely sunk to its lowest depths spiritually and morally, when we see around us hopelessness, degradation of society and when our horizon is surcharged with dark clouds of corruption, dishonesty, moral depravity, want of trust and confidence, I fancy the immediate need is to propagate the brotherhood of man with a view to serve humanity. In spite of many defects in the religious life of Muslims, a spirit of brotherhood and equality is recognized among them all over the world and so, too, their feasibility in social life as a practical idea and achievement. No difference between man and man is recognized. Islam recognizes no individual class-distinctions in its ranks. It holds a daish-knell to all superiority or inferiority complex based on rigid social distinctions. Every believer is our brother; the lowest among the

faithful can claim equality with the highest. There is no such thing as social difference in Islam. We know no untouchability. So our brotherhood is the brotherhood of entire humanity, binding man to man, nation to nation, and state to state. In short, under Islam all are equal, all are dedicated to the service of humanity.

#### Absence of Bigotry

Freedom of conscience is another practical lesson which Islam offers to the world. Our attitude towards other religions, faiths and persuasions is summed up in the two following quotations from the Koran:

"Let there be no compulsion in religion."

"Unto you your religion; unto me my religion."

Often it is said against Islam that it was spread with sword. The very word *Islam* means, as I said before, Peace; and our Holy Scripture is full of passages breathing a spirit of peace, goodwill and love. It is a historical fact that Islam was tolerant in the Jews, the Christians and other classes of people who came under its influence in the days of its rule over various parts of the world. It is well-known that the Christian Church in Spain during the Muslim rule was given extensive lands and large revenues. Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall*, mentions that the Muslim rulers in Spain transcribed, to Arabic, versions of the 'Canons of the Councils' in Spain, for the use of the Clergy in the Moorish Kingdom. Haroun-al-Rashid introduced a number of clerical schools and appointed a Christian director of those schools. You might be knowing how the much-misunderstood Turk has treated his enemies even in the battle-field during the first world-war. The Bulgarians attacked Turkey. They reached Chatalife and it was expected that the city would be captured at any moment. Just then a Greek

Prelate died in Constantinople. The good Turk even in those anxious moments was ready to give an imposing public funeral to the dead Christian prelate. Should Europe still accuse Muslims of intolerance?

It is often said that Islam spread through sword. We had the Koran in one hand and the sword in the other. Why did we do so? Every student of history knows that in the early days of Islam, the Moslems were subjected to the most tortuous persecutions. They were flogged alive, burnt alive, stoned to death, and all sorts of cruelties were inflicted on them. When they found that their enemies were bent on exterminating them, there was no other go than to defend themselves, and in self-defence Moslems had to handle the sword. But the real sword that spread the message of Islam far and wide was the sword of Koran—the Word of God. The letters which the Prophet of Islam wrote to the Kings of Abyssinia, Persia, Syria and other places, clearly prove the point. One such letter in the seventh year of Hijra by the Holy Prophet to Magnagni, the Christian King of Egypt, was discovered in the year 1858 by some French travellers at a convent in Upper Egypt. It is now preserved in Istanbul. Dr. P. Beddoe deciphered the letter and the contents are the same as we find in authentic traditions.

The Karelio conjunction no religion conversion is: "If they embrace Islam they surely follow the right way; but if they turn their backs, verily unto you is the preaching only."

#### Causes of Dissunity

You will ask me if the religion of Islam is a pacific and tolerant, why is it then that there had been so much trouble in India often resulting in bloodshed between the Hindu and the Muslim communities, in the name of religion, over questions of

"music before mosque," and "cow slaughter," etc.

The trouble is that we have not approached this issue from a social point of view, as we should have done. The issues were often fought from religious and political standpoints, though in my opinion neither religion nor politics has a direct bearing on them, for we have been told by the most learned authorities, on both sides, that neither Hinduism nor Islam will be in danger of effacement if music is stopped before a mosque or a cow is not slaughtered, and likewise, these issues need not alter our political outlook. But unfortunately, those two formidable weapons had been used in nearly all the Hindu-Muslim troubles based on these issues. Analyze the issues critically, and you will come to the conclusion that this is essentially a social problem, and certainly adjustable if it is approached in a spirit of give and take.

#### Islam and Cow Slaughter

"Cow-killing" has unfortunately been a perpetual source of bitter feeling between the Muslims and Hindus. It is our duty to find a remedy. It may help us to trace the origin of sacrificial rites. On the occasion of the festival of Id ud zuha the Muslims celebrate the historical sacrifice by Prophet Ibrahim (Biblical Abraham). But Ibrahim did not sacrifice the cow nor is the sacrifice of a bovine especially enjoined in our Scripture. On the other hand, camel or sheep is more frequently mentioned in connexion with the sacrificial rites. How many of our Hajis (pilgrims) have sacrificed cows in Arabia the home of Islam, and if they have not done so have they disregarded any injunction of Islam? Then why do we view this question of cow sacrifice from a different angle in India?

The Emperor Bahadur, one of the greatest monarchs of his age enjoined on his son

Humayun, respect to the religious sentiments and even the prejudices of the Hindus and he particularly mentioned the cow as an animal venerated in India. Amir Habibullah Khan, King of Afghanistan, a pious Muslim, discountenanced the sacrifice of cows. The Kashmiri Moslems who tenaciously adhere to the tenets of Islam believe that cow-killing is not an injunction of our religion. If other Muslims share these views, they will not be guilty of violating the Islamic commandment.

That the blood and flesh of animals do not reach God is an accepted religious dictum. This humanitarian view is in entire accord with our conception of the Creator and His creation. The parade of sacrificial rites ought not to be countenanced when it is hurtful to a section of people. There are many other communities who eat beef, but they do not hurt the susceptibilities of their neighbours by parading the sacred and adored animal for slaughter.

In the light of these facts, I earnestly appeal to my Muslim brethren in the North (we Muslims in the South do not generally indulge in cow sacrifice) to re-examine their views on this particular form of sacrifice and test its true significance, and thereby readjust their relations with the Hindus and thus render a service of incalculable value and importance to the cause of peace in this country.

#### Religious Unity

The time has come when we should put an end to mutual bickerings. Why waste time over the non-essentials? I cannot sufficiently emphasize the need of Hindu-Muslim unity. In Egypt, you see the Christian priests in Muslim mosques, and the Ulama of Islam in Christian churches. In Egypt Muslims and Christians stand united and true solidarity of the people is not merely political but it is vital to the

existence of the nation. Hindu Muslim unity, to be vital in this country, must not be a jugglery of the opportunists. It must be true and sincere. The spiritual idealism of these faiths should make us one.

There is a story that certain men travelled a long distance in order to listen to the voice of God. They reached a sanctuary. They sat on its steps; they wanted to hear the voice. Some one passing by asked why they were there. They said, "We have waited but the voice has not yet spoken." Alas! They were sitting on the steps outside. They had no fellowship with other people. They did not know that the gates of the sanctuary would be flung open only when all would enter together the shrine within, where the voice was speaking. Here in India we, too, have travelled long distances; we are sitting on the outer steps, while the one God within summons us to have fellowship with one another.

There is much in the faiths and cultures of Islam and Hinduism, which both can appreciate and be proud of. The movement of synthesis in religion initiated by Guru Nanak owes a great deal to the study of Islam and Hinduism. Guru Nanak practised what he preached. Let us therefore strive to make religious unity a matter of fact, and not merely an idea. It is well-known, how the Hindu Raja of Umerkot sheltered the Muslim King Humayun, and how the Muslim King Akbar built a statue in the memory of Hindu Rana Pratap Singh and how the Caliph of Baghdad invited Hindu scholars of Sindh to his court, and how the Muslim Kings had Hindu Ministers and Generals and vice versa. It is a matter of common occurrence in villages where Muslims, Hindus and other classes of people sit together after the day's work, singing together the simple old melodious songs under the open sky, forgetting that

they belong to different faiths and feeling only their unity as children of the common soil, as worshippers of one God. I wish this spirit pervaded all over the country, particularly in the cities where communal troubles originate. National progress is impossible without our inter-communal solidarity.

#### Position of Women in Islam

Woman under Islam was elevated to a status which she never enjoyed previously in Arabia and elsewhere. Her rights are safeguarded by law. She has all the rights which man enjoys. The right that a husband has to remarry after a divorce or death of a wife is also extended to a wife to remarry after divorce or death of a husband. In case of disagreement which cannot possibly be set aright between the husband and the wife, each has liberty to separate and choose other partners whom they may desire. She has a share in her husband's, parent's, brother's, sister's, children's, and some other relation's property, as they have in hers. Islam conferred these rights and privileges upon women 1350 years ago, and they are very much applicable to this day.

While discussing this subject I may say a word on polygamy. Islam permits it but under certain extraordinary conditions, viz., if the wife is unfit to discharge her duties and responsibilities, and as such, the husband is given freedom to a certain limit, provided he can treat his wives justly and equitably and maintain and protect them.

It must be remembered that this permission was given at a time when for an Arab it was a normal feature of life to take any number of wives and discard them afterwards. When such was the state of society, it seems to me that the arrangement made by Islam to protect the honour of women and maintain the sanctity

attached to the institution of holy wedlock was, perhaps, the best under the circumstances. If man is prevented from seeking a suitable helpmate, his life will be unhappy, besides he is likely to run moral risks as well. There is one accusation which is often brought against the founder of Islam, i.e., that in his later years he married nine wives. True, but it is equally well known that in the full flush of youthful vigour, as a young man of four and twenty, he married a woman much senior in age and remained faithful to her for twenty-six years. At fifty years of age, when the passions are sober, he is accused of marrying wives for sexual appetite. If you look at the women he married you will find that through everyone of them an alliance was made for his people or something was gained for his followers, or the women were in sore need of protection. Surely men's lives should not be judged hastily and much less the lives of great men and prophets.

#### Social Eddicts

Islam condemns prostitution and prohibits all forms of gambling which is one of the curses of modern civilization and advocates total prohibition of strong drinks. In Muslim countries where Islamic law is in force severe punishment is expected to be meted out for these vices.

Islam exhort labour. It tooood war against itself a worker and an ware even his early disciples. Islam recognises no social barrier between the master and the servant. The injunction is that a servant should be given the same food and clothing and have the same social privileges as his master. The well known saying of the Prophet is "Pay the labourer before his sweat dries." The journey of Caliph Omar and his servant in Jerusalem is an illustration to point

#### Islam and World Culture

A good deal could be said on this sub-

ject. Europe is indebted to Islam more than she cares to remember today. In the Middle Ages when Europe had not yet resurrected its ancient civilization which was destroyed due to barbarian invasions and its own internal ills, Muslim scholars and scientists held high the torch of culture, they translated Greek and Roman classics, they taught medicine, sciences, art, poetry, history, religion, philosophy. A student of science knows that Ishaq was a great chemist, he discovered nitric acid sulphuric acid and *aqua regia*, the words alchemy, alkali etc. were derived from Arabic. Ibn Musa wrote on spherical trigonometry. Alberuni was distinguished as a botanist and he was in India for forty years to collect materials for his studies in science. Muslim scientists established observatories. Nur ud din wrote a classical work on the "Sphere." Muslim kings established free libraries and colleges and schools of learning. Haroon A l Rashid attached a school to every mosque he built. Cairo had a school of science and a free library on a grand scale. Cordova Seville and Granada had famous universities.

In architecture Muslims were very famous. The Taj Mahal at Agra is one of the noblest and the most beautiful buildings in the world.

#### Renowned Scholars

It is the glory of the Muslim world that its scholars retit the torch of learning set about gathering wisdom from all sources including India and Greece and Egypt improved on their own learning, kept up the pursuit of knowledge through many centuries until they visited places to European universities during the last two centuries or so. As early as the ninth century there were four Schools of Law under celebrated Ulamas situated in various parts of the Arabic world.

Damascus and Baghdad, Naishapur and Balkhara, Cairo, Seville and Cordova, were great seats of learning. The University system of Europe and the culture of the Renaissance were largely derived from them. Starting, no doubt, with theology as their main preoccupation, their activities were then extended to canon law, to the study of grammar, lexicography, logic, metaphysics, arithmetic, mensuration and algebra, in each of which notable contributions were made.

Although Islam is supposed to be rigid faith, these centres of thought made many contributions to rational philosophy and science, and even today the names of Ghazali, Ahmad Hasan Al Ashari, Ibn Sina (who was called Avicenna in European literature, and Averroes of Spain) are well-known to scholars. Being a Sufi myself, I am naturally attracted to the Sufi philosophers and poets. Not only in mystic speculation, but in many other branches of enquiry, the world is greatly indebted to Arab and Saracenic influence. As in the case of India, so in early Muslim civilization there was no sense of false pride or exclusiveness in matters' intellectual. Indian drama is indebted to the Greeks as also is the Indian medicine. The Muslims did not disdain to adopt the philosophy of Plato whom they took to their bosom under the Arabic name, Alifatun, or to learn from Aristotle's many-sided genius. Mathematics owed a great deal to Brahmagupta and to Bhaskara, but some revolutionary progress was made by their Arab successors.

Arab alchemy and chemistry progressed vastly under the guidance of Rhazes and of Jibir (known in Spain as Gahir) and Ibn Sina, already referred to, as well as Mansur, who may well be termed one of the pioneers of chemistry. But none of these disdained to acknowledge indebtedness to other

races and nations. The history of Astronomy which started under Egyptian and Hindu influences is typical. Caliph Mamun's academy at Baghdad and the Hall of Wisdom of the Fatimites were the originators of many of the modern scientific developments. The celebrated Heron Al Rashid got Ptolemy's 'Treatise on Astronomy' translated from the Greek, and observatories were established at Baghdad, where planetary observations were conducted and eclipses were studied. Observatories were also started in Persia, and Ulugh Bay, the grandson of Tamerlane, was himself a competent astronomer. The Arabs in fact introduced Egyptian and Indian science and literature, including folklore and fables like the *Panchatantra* into their own countries, but soon became creators and masters and not merely leeches in these lines. Modern geography and the art of history owe not a little to Arab and Saracenic impetus. This exchange of culture and the friendliness of mutual obligation have been persisting throughout the range of literature and science although they seem to have lost their power and influence in recent times; and it is a matter for profound satisfaction that the Urdu literature of today can number among its ornaments not only Hali, and Akbar, and Iqbal, but also Puran Singh, Premchand, and Pandit Sunderlal, and scores of Hindu and Sikh brethren.

#### Need for True Fellowship

I have said that the test of the true function of religion is the promotion of brotherhood. It is the failure to realize to practice this truth that is responsible for so much of discord, dissension and disharmony today. In the past, protagonists of Islam and Hindutva jointly contributed to the production of modern Indian civilization. We see its impress on their art, architecture, dress and even music. Those

of us who read the works of Omar Khayyam, Jalaluddin Rumi, and Kabir Das will realize that there is co-existence which runs between Vedanta philosophy and Muslim Sufism. They lead us to the same goal. They teach us that living for one's own self is not real religion, and that we have to live for humanity. This is the teaching of Islam—pure and simple, behind its rigid monotheism. Unfortunately, our differences, more often personal in character, have retarded the development of Hindu-Muslim culture through this blending of Vedanta and Sufism. Let us hope that every Muslim, every Hindu, every Christian, and the adherent of every faith in India will realize this supreme national need and sink their differences, and work for the good of the country without being in any way less sincere to their own faiths.

I cannot understand why the existence of many castes, creeds, religious, and persuasions in India should cause disunity and communal disharmony. The civilized countries of the world present us the example as to how various religions and diverse communities and interests are

working together and co-operating with each other in the interests of harmony and unity of national life. Should we not, therefore, in the interest of our country's progress, sink our religious and communal differences and work for the good of one another? We are born, bred, brought-up and educated in this country and our dead bones are to be interred here. As such, India is as much the Muslims' own country as that of anybody's.

Finally, I cannot allow this humble message to close without making a most fervent appeal to the followers of all religions the world over, to remove the causes of friction which are sapping the very vitals of their lives and adding to the miseries and sufferings of each other, and create a new era of mutual goodwill and fraternity by absolving their differences, so that they may live in God's earth in peace and prosperity. May the Grace of Allah shine on us! May the blessings of God rain on us! Let us all march with amity, fraternity and unity along the path of glory troddee by the great Prophets, Saints and Mahatmas.

## Islam—A Religion of Purification and Peace

Sri A.A. Mohamed Abdallah  
[Kuala Lumpur]

The word *Islam* means peace or sub-mission. It is clearly said in the Koran, "Surely the (true) religion with Allah is Islam." Therefore, the teachings given under the name of Islam, disclose all such ways, as are sure to create peace in the world, if adhered to in daily life. Those who have not made peace with God and their fellow-beings, cannot be Muslims. Therefore, "a Muslim is one, from whose hand no harm goes to another."

The object of any religion is to help its followers to work out what is noble and

good in their nature. Religion, therefore, is not only the sumtotal of belief, but doctrines and tenets which should be translated into practice. A faith without action is a dead-letter to Islam, and carries no merit in the eyes of God.

"A man's true wealth hereafter is the good he does in this world to his fellow-men. When he dies, people will say: 'What property has he left behind him?' But the angels who examine him will ask: 'What good deeds hast thou seen before thee?'" So says Mohamed. This being

so, religion could not be confined to any time, place or person. This ideal should be the corner-stone of every religion revealed to humanity.

### Origin

Therefore, the religion of Islam is existing from the very beginning of civilization; it was the religion of Adam and of all the prophets following him. For this reason, we Muslims do not look upon other religions as beliefs of human origin. We give them Divine Origin and view them all in their original purity. Prophet Mohamed has ruled: "Say: We believe in Allah, and (in) that which has been revealed to us and (in) that which was revealed in Abraham and Ismael and Isaac, Jacob and the tribes, and (in) that which was given in Moses and Jesus, and (in) that which was given to the prophets from their Lord; we do not make any distinction between any of them, and to Him do we submit." (Koran, XI: 136)

If the word Muslim means one who submits to Divine Law and subordinates his will to the Will of the Most High, then he submits himself to the commandments contained in the Koran and the sayings of the Prophet Mohamed.

The Koran has been passed on to us uncorrupted, as drops of rain. The Muslim believes in Torah and Bible and other Books that were revealed to humanity. Koran descended upon humanity at a time when the world needed a fresh chastisement from God and an Apostle to correct the wrongs which then existed particularly in Arabia. Some hundreds of years had elapsed since the Elevation of Jesus Christ. His teachings had hardly touched Arabia. To mention, fresh rains—unpolluted rains from the sky—were needed to revitalize the already polluted rivers and channels of dogmas due to their contact with worldliness. The spiritual and temporal side of society

needed rejuvenation, and hence a glorious Revelation was made by the Creator to humanity through his apostle Prophet Mohamed.

### Articles of Faith

There are seven articles of faith in Islam. Belief in: (1) God, (2) angels, (3) sacred books, (4) divine messengers, (5) the hereafter, (6) measurement of good and evil by God, and (7) rising after death.

Oneness is the keynote to the conception of the Divine Being in Islam. It admits of no participation of manifoldness. He is the "Lord of the worlds." He is Beneficent and Merciful.

Angels are not objects of adoration. They are functionaries in the working of the world on the physical plane. They act as Spirits which exhibit their attributes with as great exactness as if they possessed a mind. Everything organic or inorganic seems to possess a prescribed course and inanimate nature seems to be more faithful than we, intelligent beings. This law-abidingness in the dead matter is the work of an angel.

On the spiritual plane also, angels perform their functions. They act as inviters to good, bring messages from God to man, and guide them to good, and guard them against evil. When a soul reaches the height of spirituality and becomes devoid of all selfish grossness, angels act as ministers to his needs and become his servants.

### Life After Death

The Holy Koran makes it clear that the state after death is a complete exhibition of our spiritual state in this life. Hence the good and bad conditions of the deeds and beliefs of a man, are latent within him, but in the life to come, they shall become manifest and clear as day light. In this way we shall account for our good or bad deeds in life.

The heaven and hell shall be the places of abode of the righteous and the wicked respectively. Though physical names to the blessings and sufferings of the other world, are given in the Koran, in order to give some idea of things to come, yet another verse mentions that "No soul knows the blessings and joys which have been kept secret for it."

Life after death though new in its nature is the continuity of the present life. Death in Islam is not annihilation or extinction but the same cessation of the ever-progressive element for the time being, which we observe in everything in the course of evolution that when it finishes a course of one order it enters into another. The interval is always attended with stagnation which is called Burzaq. This begins and ends with what are respectively termed death and resurrection in popular language. Hell is of a purgatorial nature. Islam, therefore, believes in a continuous life, the progress of which knows no bounds. Life passes through various stages of growth, and our sojourn on this earth plane is one of them. The seven heavens of Islam are seven stages of progress, and our life continues till we merge in the Divine Essence.

#### Five Pillars of Islam

We have seen above that man's life has no end and continues to travel in all its progressive stages until it merges in the Divine Essence. The Book reveals that like everything in Nature man enters into this world with a pure and untainted mind possessing the highest capacities with unlimited power hence being capable of sinking to the lowest of the low. "One can reach the goal and avoid the abyss, if one receives proper guidance. Man possesses capabilities for sublimation and degradation. On one side, he clings to

earth, seeing that he comes out of clay. He is an animal, nay, sometimes worse than that, on the other hand, he is the vicegerent of God on this earth, he receives inheritance from the angels and rises to the very borders of Divinity. The former is the beginning and the latter is his goal. The Koran came to uplift man from carnality to Divinity.

Islam does not take the soul as a different entity that descends from somewhere and mixes with the body. The soul, at its inception, lies concealed in the animal consciousness of man, it comes to the surface at a later stage after which further developments make it perfect. Seven are its evolutionary states:

Ammarah—the commanding,

Lawwama—the self-accusing,

Mulhim—the inspired,

Mutmainn—at rest,

Radiah—pleased with God,

Mardiyah—pleased to God and

Kamilah—the perfected.

Islam uplifts Ammarah to Kamilah. Islam teaches us to control our hostile elements and to merge in Divinity. To attain Kamilah i.e. perfection, man should go through the above evolutionary and purificatory stages.

Now let me proceed to the structure on which the creed of Islam rests. Islam subjectively has a disposition to obey laws. It respects social order. To strengthen this disposition, Koran prescribes a course of disciplinary measures rightly called the five pillars of Islam.

1 The Formula of Faith,

2 Prayer

3 Fasting

4 Charity, and

5 Pilgrimage to Mecca

"By no means shall you attain righteousness until you spend out what you love." This includes your occupation,

food, drink, coonuhial compaooshtp, wealth, family histoess, friends, clothes, persoal comforts and, above ell, various objects of our adoratioe These are our chief cocceros and cause the whole struggle io life They move our criminal teodeocies if we are not scropulously honest

To preyers we part with our occupations, to festtng with our foods, drtnk and coonuhial relattoos, and in charity with a portion of our wealth Then comes the pilgrimage We leave our family, friends, business and country and we part with our clothes and comforts covering ourselves with two sheets, and when we enter Hadjaz we shstao from dispotea, quarrels and evil leouage We observe strict fraternal reletios with streogers, always prooleiming cloud our readiness to offer all that we possess to God To the end we kill en animal

Till then we had precilally forsaken everything pertsting to the crevings of the passions and the demands

of the animal within That we had crushed If therefore, the last ceremony of the pilgrimage consists in killing a brote, it rightly symbolizes the killing of the flesh It washes out man's sin, if performed in the right spirit He discards the flesh and frees the soul He makes himself a true Muslim

Let me conclude with the following verse from the Koran "It is not righteousness (it says) that you turn your faces towards the East and the West but righteousnes is this that one should believe in Allah and the last Day and the Angels and the Book and the Prophets, and give away wealth, out of love for Him, to the near of kin and orphans, and the needy and the wayfarers and the hegqara and for the captives, and keep up prayer and give alms and be performers of promises and be patient in distress and in affliction and in time of conflict."

Let us, therefore, create a Society of Universal Brotherhood God bless us all\*

## The Place of Reason in Islam

Sir H. Ahmed, M.A.

### What is Islam?

Mohamed defined Islam as purity of thought, speech and action At another occasion he defined Islam as hospitality and tolerance Religion, according to the Prophet of Islam, is a straight natural law for man to follow, the natural bent of a free unbiased mind, and man the vice- regent of God on earth to a very real sense, inspired by his Master to know the good and reloce the evil in short Islam is a religion of Nature Man from different religions and countries can be Moslims by virtue of their steadfastness and good

character Islam stands for success and progress in the world Islam, if properly interpreted, can be understood by the term "practical mysticism"

### What It is Not'

The religion of Islam stands forth free of all mystery, dogmas and articles of faith which are inconsistent with reason and commonsense There is no declaration of faith in Islam There is also no place of schismatism in it

The outward show to which the Mosims, all over the world give undue importance is not Islam Performing a set of rites to a

\* A paper read at the Conspectus of Religions held under the auspices of the Pure Life Society at Kuala Lumpur, Malaya

prescribed way is not Islam. In the early days of Islam the Prophet "did away with all ceremonies which were in the hands of designing priesthood." To believe in angels, resurrection life after death heaven, hell, etc., in a certain manner is not Islam. Giving particular types of names is not Islam.

The whole structure of the present day Islam rests on the 'Sayings' of the Prophet. The scholars of Islam are fully aware that these grounds (i.e. Fikh and the sayings) are not firm. Thus it is my contention that the so-called Islam of today which rests on these unfirm grounds is not at all the Islam as taught by the great Prophet of Arabia through the Koran.

#### Religion of Cast Iron Dogma?

There is a universal tendency to indulge in obscure and abstruse practices without ever trying to know their meaning. Islam became an easy prey of this tendency. The teachings of Islam, which are sublime and inclusive of all nations and races and which constitute the crown of all culture have degenerated to a considerable extent. There is no spirituality in the present day Islam. It is a universal truth that when narrow-minded fanaticism raises its ugly head, spiritual stagnation prevails. The mind of the present-day Muslim is not the mind which the Koran wanted to build in which it actually built in the early centuries of the Islamic era. The Islam which was taught by the great Prophet has changed to a remarkable degree. At present the ideas and teachings have crystallized and have found their expression in stereotyped formulae. It has become a religion of cast iron dogmas. Since the death of the Prophet, the religious life of the Muslims has progressively degenerated.

#### Who is to be Blamed?

The German writer Karl May through his travel and adventure novels has not mis-

represented Islam so such as have the sincere enemies of Islam done from within. The Christian missionaries also have greatly exploited the weaknesses of the mis-represented Islamic doctrines. They are not to be blamed for that. In fact, all those Muslims are to be blamed who in the course of centuries have brought down the grand and noble principles of Islam to their own level and interpreted the Koran according to their own thinking. The missionaries, in fact opened the eyes of many Muslims and have helped in arriving at the original teachings. Swami Dayananda Saraswati of India by writing the famous fourteenth chapter of his book 'Satyarth Prakash'—the Bible of the Arya Samaj Movement has not done any harm to Islam as compared to the harm done by orthodox Muslim theologians. The Zionist Movement in spite of all its orthodoxy has not misconstrued the teachings of Islam. The teachings of Islam were already misconstrued mostly by the orthodox Muslim scholars.

It is very disappointing to note that even in this day, the thinking of the majority of Muslim scholars is medieval. Most of the Muslim delegates to the recent Colloquium of Islamic Culture sponsored jointly by the Library of Congress and the Princeton University opposed the Western scholars' suggestion that modern critical methods should be applied to the Koran Texts. The Koran to which it was also felt the Islamic culture goes for the basic spirit and inspiration leaves to the reasonable judgment of the reader to decide as to who is to be blamed.

#### Degeneration of Islam

The people of the Mosque are engrossed in a social order perpetuated under the aegis of a fanatical hierarchy, to whom all sense of rationality appears heretical. The present day Muslims have become hopelessly dependent on the orthodox, ignorant

### Conclusion

If I have been successful to show why I have laboured to point out the place of reason in Islam, I shall be more than happy. My views may raise some criticism among the orthodox scholars of Islam in certain parts of the world. My idea in writing this article is to stir the imagination of young Muslims. It is for them to calculate as to how much harm is done to humanity by religious orthodoxy. The reader will observe that I have expressed my view very bluntly and very frankly. Liberals for their liberality may compromise with the orthodoxy but I being an 'orthodox Liberal' can not do so. I am not sorry for the frankness but I am sorry for not being able to express my point of view more elaborately.

due to the limited space. No one with reason and commonsense can accept the present situation. A new world order can be ushered in if the obsolete religious conventions which are responsible for dividing one religion from the other and for creating differences are intelligently challenged and effectively remodelled. It is by no means an easy task. It requires mental emancipation in the first instance followed by a long and hard struggle. A careful study of the religious reform movements in Islam will show how independent minds suffered and how their ideology was suppressed by the fanatics in the name of dogmatism and 'Shariat'. The present intellectual standards are much to their sacrifices.\*

## Is Islam Anti-Humanitarian?

Dr Mohammad Hafiz Syed, Ph.D. D.Litt.  
[Altabebad]

The most tragic and heart rending happenings in the past, in the various parts of our country, have created great suspicion in our minds regarding the unwholesome influence that Islam is supposed to exercise on the lives and dinings of its followers. It is believed in certain quarters that this religion preached by the Prophet of Islam is mainly responsible for it. It is alleged that Islam countenances and encourages arson, loot, seduction and forcible conversion. It, therefore becomes the duty of every fair minded person whether Muslim or non Muslim to ascertain once for all whether the religion of Islam which according to the unanimous verdict of the historians of the world wrought miraculous changes in transforming the lives of barbarous communities like

the Arabs and elevated them from the lowest depth of moral degradation to a higher level of civilization has really enjoined on its adherents to be so intolerant and almost inhuman as to perpetrate all sorts of moral crimes in the name of God and religion or has it any element of brotherhood, humanity, charity and mutual good will or not.

### Basic Principles

The basic principle of Islam i.e. faith in all the prophets of the world is enough to give the lie to these allegations. The great and liberal mind that preached not only love and respect for the founders of the great religions of the world but much more than that faith in them could not shrank down to the level of utter intolerance for those very religions. Tolerance\*

\*A Paper read at one of the World Religion Congresses held under the auspices of the Asanai Kyo Japan

is not in fact the word that can sufficiently indicate the breadth of the attitude of Islam to other religious. It preaches equal love for all, equal respect for all and equal faith in all. No compulsion was intended on the 'unbelievers' to accept Islam, for it was against all the broad principles in which Muslims had been brought up. Their ideal was to establish religious freedom, to stop all religious persecution, to protect the houses of worship of all religions, mosques among them. Here are a few quotations:

"And had there not been God's repelling some people by others, there would have been pulled down cloisters and churches, and any synagogues and mosques in which God's name is much remembered" (Koran, 22: 40)

"And fight with them until there is no persecution, and religion is only for God" (2: 193)

"Every student of Islamic history knows that the Holy Prophet and his companions were subjected to the severest persecutions as Islam began to gain ground in Mecca." (Introduction to the Koran by Muhammad Ali.)

So from the first to the last, the Holy Koran allowed fighting only against those who fought the Muslims first, it allowed expressly only fighting in defence without which the Muslims could not live, and it clearly forbade aggressive war.

#### Waging of War on 'Unbelievers'

Again, intolerance could not be ascribed to a book which excludes compulsion from the sphere of religion altogether. "There is no compulsion in religion" (II, 256), the Koran lays down in the clearest words. In fact the Koran is full of statements showing that belief in this and that religion is a person's own concern, and that he is given the choice to adopt one way or another; that if he accepts truth, it

is for his own good, and if he sticks to error, it is to his own detriment. A few quotations from the Koran are given below to prove the authenticity of these statements:

"The truth is from your Lord, so let him who please believe and let him who please disbelieve" (18: 29)

"If you do good, you will do good for your own souls; and if you do evil, it shall be for them"

The Muslims were allowed to fight indeed, but with what object? To compel others to accept Islam is a myth, pure and simple, a thing unknown to the teachings of the Koran.

The conception of God in Islam is the God of all mankind and His favours are not confined to any 'chosen' people. The Muslims are prohibited from running down the deities of non-Muslims. The Holy Koran says:

"Revile not those whom they call on besides God, lest they in their ignorance despitfully revile Him" (VI: 108)

#### No Distinction in Service

Every Muslim is enjoined not to make any distinction between Muslim and non-Muslim when he has an opportunity of serving a needy person. The Prophet says in unambiguous language:

"The whole world is the family of God. Therefore, he alone is good in His sight who accords kind treatment to all His creatures alike."

Further the Prophet says:

"Assist any person oppressed, whether Muslim or non-Muslim"

"Whosoever goes with a tyrant to assist him, knowing him to be a tyrant, then verily he has gone out of Islam"

"It is not for the Muslim to ignore any one of the great teachers who have long since done their work and retired from this world; he dare not utter a word of dis-

respect towards them. On the contrary he is bound to show the greatest deference to each one of them." (IV : 150-152)

#### Respect to All Prophets

Speaking of the prophets of the house of Israel, the Koran says, "Say ye, we believe in God, and what was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and what was given to the other prophets from their Lord—we make no distinction between any of them; and to him we submit." (II-136, III-84)

And it is not only to Moses and Jesus and Mohamed that the Muslim owes allegiance, but to all the prophets of all the nations who have appeared in the different ages of the history of mankind. Thus along with a thousand others, Ramachandra, Krishna, and Gautama Buddha of India, Zarathushtra of Persia and Confucius of China, have alike a place in the hearts of all true followers of Islam.

#### Forcible Conversion Disallowed

Forcible and unwilling conversion is repeatedly forbidden in the Koran. On the other hand it inculcates simple preaching through persuasion as the only permissible method for spreading the faith of Islam. The Koran's injunction is as clear as daylight. It puts it thus:

"There is no compulsion in faith." (II-253)

"You shall have your religion and I shall have my religion." (cix : 109)

"And we have not sent thee otherwise than to mankind at large, to announce and to warn" (xxxvi : 27)

"(My) sole (work) is preaching from God and His message." (lxvii : 24)

"Ohey God and obey the apostle; but if you turn away, yet is our apostle only charged with plain-spoken preaching." (xiv : 12)

#### Ideal of Human Fraternity

In Islam, all humanity is one vast brn-

therhood, with God as their Creator and Master who looks upon them all as equal. All the barriers racial and others, raised against it by the self-interest of man are eschewed; difference and division merely on the ground of religion are not recognized. Its teachings are directly opposed to sectarianism and are generally based on the broad principle of common humanity. "Be ye all worshippers of God and brothers in one another, like as God has commanded you." (Sayings of Mohamed, 904.) The service of man and the good of humanity constitutes pre-eminently the service and worship of God. "All creation," says the Prophet of Islam, "is the family of God, and of all creation the most haloved of God is he who does most good to His family."

"God is not merciful to him who is not merciful to men" (Sayings, 511)

"The merciful God is merciful to those who are merciful; be ye then merciful in those who are in the earth, so that He who is in heaven may be merciful to you" (508)

"Ye shall not believe unless ye love one another." (194)

"By him in whose hand my life is—no worshipper (truly) believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself." (214)

The essence of religion according to the teachings of Islam, is the service of the afflicted humanity. "Hast thou seen him who calls the religion a lie? That is (the man) who pushes away the orphan, and stirs not up (others) to feed the poor."

"And woe to those who pray—who o their prayers are unmindful, who make a show, and refuse help to the needy." (The Koran, cvii)

#### Muslims' Moral Duty

What is the duty of man in Islam? "Verily," says the Quran, "God commands justice and the doing of good, and the giving to those of kind (their due); and He

forbids filthy actions and inequality and transgression." (Koran, xvi, 90)

"When one of you see wrong-doing," said the Prophet, "Let him undo it with his hand; and if he cannot do this, then let him speak against it with his tongue; and if he cannot do this either, then let him abhor it with his heart—and this is the least of faith" (Sayings, 325)

"Assist one another in goodness and piety, but assist not one another in sin and evildoing, and fear God; verily God is severe in punishing. And let not the malice of a people provoke you to transgress but act justly—it will be nearer to piety, and fear God; verily God is informed of what ye do." (The Koran, V, 2 and 8)

#### Harmlessness

Wanton destruction of life is considered reprehensible.

"There is no moving thing on the earth, nor a bird that flies with its wings, but is a being like to you .... to their Lord shall they be gathered" (VI, 38)

"Who kills a sparrow for nothing—if will cry aloud to God on the day of resurrection, saying O my Lord, such and such a man killed me for no good" (Sayings, 36)

"Take not things, which have life, to shoot (arrows at)." (39)

The Prophet of Islam decried the heartless act of men who burnt the abode of ants. (46, 54)

He forbade the robbing of eggs from the nests of birds. (55)

He forbade likewise the capturing of young birds and distressing the mother-

bird and would have them restored to their nests (54 and 55)

The Prophet would go up to any distressed animal, and stroke him and rejoice upon their master's kindness against oppression and fatigue. (53)

#### Value of Human Life

Regarding the value of human life the Koran teaches: "Whoso kills a being, unless it be for another helog, or for evil doing in the land, it is as though he killed all mankind, and whoso saves one, it is as though he saves all mankind."

In Chapter IV, verses 15 and 16, fornication is strictly denounced. Similarly abduction of innocent women, and killing of helpless children are condemned. Once more we are clearly reminded by the Prophet that "He who helpeth his fellow-creature in the hour of need, and he who helpeth the oppressed, him will God help in the day of travail. What actions are most excellent? To gladden the heart of a human being, to feed the hungry, to help the afflicted, to lighten the sorrow of the sorrowful and to remove the wrongs of the injured. Who is the most favoured of God? He from whom the greatest good cometh to His creatures."

From the quotations given above, it is for the readers to judge if Islam is anti-humanitarian, as some label it, and it is for all Muslims to prove to the world the practical implications of the sacred teachings of Islam through their personal examples.

### The Most High

Praise the name of thy Lord the Most High,  
Who hath created and adorned all things,  
And who hath fixed their destinies and guided them;  
Who bringeth forth the pastures,  
Thee reduceth them to dusty stubble.  
We will teach thee to recite the Koran,—  
And we will make easy for thee the easiest way.

(From the Koran, by J.M. Rodwell)

# The Message of Islam

Sri Gaori Prasad

[Retired Judge, Swarajayana]

The term *Islam* signifies, to the first instance, to be tranquil, to have done one's duty, to be at perfect peace, and finally, to surrender oneself to Him with whom peace is made. So, Islam really signifies being at peace and living in accordance with God's words and commands, leading the life of a righteous man.

The Prophet (Mohamed) regarded religion as a straight, natural law for men to follow. According to the Prophet, man was the vicegerent of God on earth in a very responsible sense, inspired of his Creator to know what is wrong and what is right for him. (Koran, xci, 7,8); and it is only when man refuses to follow out the highest and the best to him and deliberately chooses the lower and the worse to him that he approximates to the lowest brute. Religion was thus the natural bent of a free, unbiased mind of man. In the language of the Gita, a man's *sadharma* was his natural religion. Similarly, the Holy Koran says: 'Set thy purpose for religion as I made by nature upright—the nature (framed) of Allah, to which He hath created me. There is no altering (the laws of) Allah's creation. That is the right religion; but most men know not.' (xxx,30)

## Common Source

According to the Prophet, men were originally of one religion (which he named Islam), and when differences arose, Allah sent Prophets as bearers of good tidings and as warners, and revealed therewith the Scripture with the truth that it might judge between mankind concerning that wherein they differed. (ii,213)

We find in the Holy Koran statements repeatedly made that divine messages of

wisdom and of truth were sent to all nations all over the world by Allah through a countless succession of Prophets and Seers. It will thus be seen that the Islam of Mohamed is not a new religion; its significance lay in restoring to the Muslim world, in a spiritually dark period of Arabia, the pristine glory of the faiths of the Prophets and Seers of bygone ages to their original purity and sublimity. In fact, every religion in its place is an exposition of the Divine Life to humanity, and so is Islam.

## Brotherhood

In Islam, all humanity is regarded as one vast brotherhood, with Allah as their Creator and Master who looks upon them all as equals. The Holy Koran says: 'O mankind, lo! we have created you, male and female, and have made you nations and tribes, that ye may know one another. Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct. Lo! the Allah is Knower, Aware' (xlii,13). The Prophet himself has said, 'Be ye all worshippers of God, and brother to one another, like as God has commanded you' . . .

## Sectarianism Disfavoured

'O ye apostles! eat of good things and act upright; verily, I know what ye do. And, verily, this your religion is one religion, and I am your lord, so fear me. But they have cut up their religion among themselves into sects, each sect rejoicing in its tenets. So leave them in their error till a time.' (xxii,51-54)

*Overbearing conduct in religious matters was also reprobated by Mohamed. He preached thus: "They say, there is no obligation upon us in respect to the Gentiles. They speak lie concerning Allah knowingly.*

Nay, but he who fulfilleth his pledge and wardeth off (evil); for lo! Allah loveth those who ward off evil. Lo! those who purchase a small gain at the cost of Allah's covenant and their oaths, they have no portion in the Hereafter. Allah will neither speak to them nor look upon them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He make them grow. Theirs will be a painful doom." (III, 75-77)

#### Service of Humanity

"All creation is the family of God, and of all creation the most beloved of God is he who does most good to His creatures. The Merciful God is merciful to those who are merciful; he then ye merciful to those who are on the earth, so that He who is in Heaven may be merciful to you.....God will not be merciful to him who is not merciful to men." (Sayings 269, 508 & 511)

"God is always ready to help His worshipper, so long as the worshipper is ready to help his brother." (1017) The Holy Koran says the very same thing in not very different language: "Whosoever surrendereth his purpose to Allah while doing good, he verily hath grasped the firm hand-hold." (xxxi,22) "Good deeds annul ill deeds." (xi,114) "Ah, what will convey unto thee what the ascent is. (It is) to free a slave, and to feed in the day of hunger an orphan, near of kin, or some poorwretch in misery, and to be of those who believe and exhort one another to perseverance and exhort one another to pity." (xc,12-18). "And whoever hopeth for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous work and make no sharer of the worship due unto his Lord." (vii,111)

#### Oneness of God

The entire elementary teachings of Islam commence with the simple belief in the oneness of God. In fact, the whole edifice of the faith of Islam is built on the infallible doctrine of *tawheed* or the faith of

'Blessed Oneness.' Throughout the whole of the Holy Koran this singular belief in one God has been effectually taught to the Muslims in the simplest way. Over and over again, nature has been called to bear witness to the existence of God, and all rational and relevant evidences have been cited to prove His Oneness.

Unconscious of the deeper meaning of this Blessed Oneness, the average Mussalmān with his simple belief of God's eternity, omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience, mercy, benevolence, etc., is apparently content with leading a life according to the injunctions of the Code of his religion as he understands them, always placing his deep trust in His Mercy for all his sins of omission or commission. To him, his God is more or less a personal and practical God (by no means a physical one). What is required is the fullest conception, say, the innermost consciousness and a complete realization of oneness, unity in diversity,—all in God and 'God in all.' The following are the various stages of arriving at this happy end:—

- (1) An implicit and strong faith in the Oneness of God,
- (2) Sincere seeking of Oneness,
- (3) Knowing of Oneness, and
- (4) Realization of Oneness.

#### Realization

Islam enjoins realization as the first condition of a human life, the highest of all created life (*ashraf-ul maghluqat*). Development of soul-consciousness, peace of mind and ever-increasing happiness are the attendants of these stages of spiritual growth. Realization of oneness completely supersedes individual consciousness. All limitations vanish; the finite becomes infinite. Having crossed all barriers of the limited self, the *Mutawhid* (the master of oneness) is able to lead a perfectly

harmonized life a life of purity and divine love, only caring for others and ready to make any sacrifice in the service of humanity. He then becomes identical with Absolute Knowledge, Absolute Bliss, Absolute Eternity (Saichidananda).

The Holy Koran alludes to this state in the following verse:

*Hal ata' alal insani, heenum min addahr  
lam yakun shai'an mazkoora*

(Has man realized that state when he was what could not be described?)

The realization of this Oneness being the sole aim of life in Islam, "acts" are encouraged or discouraged according to their helpfulness or impedance in the progress of man towards the desired End.

The Five Pillars of the Faith of Islam, best calculated to realize the Blessed Oneness, are:

(1) The belief in the unity of God and the acknowledgment of Mohamed as a Prophet of God,

- (2) Prayer,
- (3) Fasting,
- (4) Charity, and
- (5) Pilgrimage.

It will thus be seen that Islam, though comparatively young in age as a religious Faith, embraces all the fundamental and basic principles of human life to enable mankind to attain Self-realization on this earth-plane, and is, in its essence, identical with all ancient great religions of the world. Amen!

## The Basic Concepts of Islam —And Their Influence in India—

Dr. Syed Abdul Latif, Ph.D.

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The subject under review is too vast to be dealt with adequately in a short article. It covers nearly a thousand years of the cultural history of a veritable sub-continent peopled by a variety of communities, standing at different cultural levels, at the time of their initial contact with Islam. The strains flowing from it have not been simultaneous in every part of the country. They have been, during the early stages at any rate, piecemeal or successive, and at times even spasmodic. A linear or chronological treatment vertically, or area by area, supplemented by a horizontal survey at certain specific stages, may probably be an appropriate approach to the subject. Evidently this is not possible in a brief note such as is expected of me here. I can at best state the problems arising out of it, leaving the task of filling to details

hy investigation to those qualified to enter upon them.

Islam came to India—I refer to the geographical entity—as an alien faith. It is now no longer so. Today it is one of the living faiths and counts among India's Islamic followers nearly one hundred million souls, most of whom are of the same stock as that of the rest of the population. An investigation into this development may take us beyond the limits of our subject, for other factors equally powerful have also contributed to the result. What is however pertinent to note here is that the basic conceptions of Islam are at this moment believed in tacitly by a large population of this land, suggesting thereby that the influence has not been casual or perfunctory but close indeed. One might, no doubt, venture on an examination of the

form in which these conceptions are held today by the Muslims of the land, and ascertain whether their basic character has undergone any change in the atmosphere of India. But that will be tracing the reflex influence or the influence of the indigenous faiths on the basic conceptions of Islam, and may on that account not exactly come within the purview of our subject although it might form a useful complementary study. The subject to hand should resolve itself into a study in the impact of Islam on the faiths prevailing in the land with which it came into contact in the course of history.

For the basic conceptions of Islam which are relevant to our subject here and which will have to be traced to the history of India's religious thought, one will have to go directly to the Koran. It may not be possible, in fact, it is not necessary, to furnish a list of them here. They may be classified under one or other of the two guiding principles governing the Koranic "view of life." The one may be styled the "Law of Unity in Life," the other the "Law of Movement in life." Under the first comes in the supremely basic conception of the Unity of God which according to the Koran has to express itself in the unity of man. Under the other, falls the problem of the perfection of man. The credal formula *la ilaha illallah*—there is none worthy of worship except God," brushes aside all man-made distinctions of caste and station in material life, and places man next to God. It gives him a dignity of his own, relating to respect to that of any other created object. It enunciates the principle of equality of man before God and argues a democratic way of living. The other principle, the Law of Movement, is what is expressed in the Koranic message: "From state to state shall ye surely be carried forward" (K 84:18). Under this move-

ment life has to disclose itself "every moment in fresh glory" (K 55:29). Anything done by man to retard this movement of his is sin in Islam and has to be atoned for by a process of self purification, of exacting as it must be before any further advance is attempted here or hereafter. Death consequently is not the end of life to Islam. It is an opening to a new form of existence. Under this basic concept life becomes a linear line and not a cycle, death being just a birthplace ushering a new life. "Blessed is He... . who hath created death and life to test which of you is best in point of deed" (K 67:2) "It is we who have decreed that death should be among you [that you should live], (K 56:60). At all events, there is no coming back to earth of a departed soul and resuming an earthly frame once again. That will be against the scheme of things envisaged by the Koran; "From state to state shall ye surely be carried forward."

Such are the basic conceptions which Islam brought into India. In what manner they have impinged themselves on the corresponding religious thoughts of the people here is for the investigator to determine. For this, the student will have to examine the religious literature not in one language of the country but in all the leading languages here. And this is not the task of a single investigator but of several, working in collaboration.

Of the several basic conceptions, that of the unity of God is the most characteristic, as it is round this that every other conception revolves. The task of the prospective student is to concentrate on this concept in the first instance. Speaking of its influence on Indian thought, the late Rev. C. F. Andrews throws out a suggestive observation. Says he:

"One of the greatest blessings which Islam has brought to East and West alike

has been the emphasis that, at a critical period in human history, it placed upon the Divine Unity. For, during those dark ages both in East and West, from 600 to 1000 A.D. this doctrine was in danger of being overlaid and obscured in Hinduism and in Christianity itself, owing to the immane secretions of subsidiary worshipships of countless demi-gods and heroes. Islam has been, both to Europe and India, in their dark hour of aberration from the sovereign truth of God a *Unity, an invaluable corrective and deterrent.* Indeed, without the final emphasis on this truth, which Islam gave from its central position—facing India and facing Europe—it is doubtful whether this idea of the oneness of God could have found so established place in human thought, which is uncontested in the intellectual world today." (*The Genuine Islam*, Singapore, Vol. I, No. 8, 1936).

The above observation may be read along with an equally suggestive observation made by Dr. Radhakrishnan:—

"The monotheistic elements of Hinduism have become more emphasized after the spread of Islam in India. Yet Hinduism could easily have learnt more" (*The Heart of Hindustan*, 3rd Ed., page 87).

The two statements should serve as clues to the student of the subject, for it is between the two estimates that every reaction to Islam, whether in the South or in the North, is probably founded. The same suggestion may as well apply to the other basic concepts that I have referred to.

I might, however, offer a word of caution. It may be noted that the advent of Islam into South India was through the instrumentality of the Arabs who were already known to the people of the soil for centuries together as trustworthy traders. Their influence as Moslems starts with the

very first century of the Hijra (seventh century A.D.) and extends to the eleventh century A.D., to be merged ultimately with the influences which darted into the South from the North across the Vindhyaas. The basic conceptions of Islam which the Arabs introduced into the country were purer in form and closer to the Koranic original than those which forced their entry into the land from the North-West. The latter were more or less amalgamized (non-Arab) forms of Islamic conceptions charged particularly with Sufist strains. Further, the Arabs who settled down in the South or on the western coast had retained the Koranic sense of democracy, whereas the central Asian races who migrated from the North-West were already feudalized in their social bearing. This is a very important aspect of the problem which one has to keep in mind; for, any reaction to Islam over here is to be viewed not merely in the light of the basic conceptions furnished by the Koran, but also in the light of the colour lent to them prior to their sojourn in India.

In conclusion I should point out that among the various scholars, both Indian and European, who have applied themselves to the subject, special attention should be paid to the masterly monograph of Dr. Tarachand entitled *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, published at Allahabad in 1936. He gives a list of reformers, saints and poets belonging both to the South and the North who in their several ways have reacted favourably to the influence of Islam. The learned author has, at the end of his treatise, given a very copious bibliography helpful to the study of the subject under review.

(Courtesy: Peace Institute of Indic Studies, Waltair)

# Some Islamic Formulae of Meditation

Sri Anwarul Hasan  
[Azamgarh]

The best type of meditation, according to orthodox Muslim mystics, is the visualization of the form of one's spiritual preceptor. The physical form of the preceptor should be meditated upon as a vivid manifestation of the Allah, or as a mirror reflecting His divine attributes. This meditation should be practised well before taking up any other form of meditation. Regular practice of this meditation will enable one to receive divine visions through the agency of the preceptor, even though he might be no longer present to the physical form.

It is, however, not possible for all to have the good fortune of coming across a truly enlightened Pir who is fit to be meditated upon, and the relative actions of the preceptor, which may not conform to the lofty spiritual ideals of the aspirant, may as well come on the way of having absolute faith in his Self realization. The modern mind, when it is unsatisfied about the spiritual perfection of the preceptor, can never be adequately equipped for this type of meditation. Hence, the Muslim mystics have also laid equal emphasis on the other forms of meditation, according to the temperament and spiritual growth of the aspirant.

The guidance of any advanced spiritual seeker in these meditations, i.e. the absence of a preceptor, is thought to be essential. If such guidance is not available, the aid of authoritative and reliable texts on the subject is to be sought.

Abstract meditation can be practised on any of the following formulae of the holy Koran, which are rather identical.

1. God is present in me; He sees me; He is with me.

2. God surrounds everything.
3. Everything in this world perhaps except the majestic presence of God.
4. Does not man know that God sees him?

Meditation can also be practised on the empty space by steadily gazing at the clear sky. When the eyes are tired, one might close them for a while, and again continue to gaze at the sky with the background thought that it is the symbol of the Allah.

Concrete meditation is to be practised as follows:

Draw a picture of the heart on a piece of paper. The colour of the heart should be of either reddish or bluish hue, over which the word 'Allah' should be written in gold or silver letters. Concentrate on the picture and gradually try to focalize your attention on the word 'Allah'.

Visualize the word 'Allah' written in gold or silver letters within your heart.

Visualize your heart to be a silver tablet, over which there is a white lotus, and over the lotus the word 'Allah' is written in gold or silver letters.

Visualize God as a vast, smoothly flowing river, which has sparkling water, and imagine yourself to be a drop of that water therein.

Visualize God as a great sea of light and imagine yourself to be a spark enkindled in that intelligence.

Visualize God as an all-enveloping disk of light, and imagine yourself to be a shadow lost in that darkness.

Meditate on a point, which is of the colour of reddish black, shining brilliantly in the centre of the brain. Imagine this point getting bigger and bigger with increasing intensity until it envelops your

whole body and ultimately the entire world. The mental concomitant of this visualization is the idea that nothing exists but He. The practitioner of this exercise sometimes gets visions of angels in that all-spreading light. The final aim is to realize the oneness with the Absolute.

Here is another form of meditation. Get up early in the morning before sunrise. Sit with the back to the east in the posture similar to that of Vajrasan. Incline your face inwards the sky. Open your eyes. Feel the coolness of the air. Then close the eyes as if to absorb the subtle coolness and the mystic stillness of the early morning hours. Repeat this again and again till sunrise. The effect of this exercise will be experienced within ten days.

According to Muslim mystics, there are various subtle emanations of the cosmic force which are condonive to particular ends at particular times.

The second half of the night, that is, from

after midnight till before dawn, is very helpful for meditation.

The early hours of the dawn (before sunrise) are best suited for those aspiring to reach the higher regions of light.

The first few hours following sunrise are suitable for the manifestation of subtle emanations caused by the performance of rituals or ceremonies.

The period of midday is the right time for receiving spiritual vibrations which move the inner mind with a flaming intensity in the experience of divine love.

The hour of dusk is the proper period for experiencing a mild mystic ecstasy.

The first part of the night, that is, from after dusk till midnight, is suitable for introspection, self-examination, reflecting and deep thinking.

Prayer offered to God at sunrise and sunset is particularly effective, since at both these periods there is a wonderful mystic force that intensifies the power of prayer and harmonizes its free flow.

## Some Occult Exercises of the Muslim Mystics

Sri Anwarul Hasan

Purity of mind, strength of will, sanctity of faith, power of celibacy and the degree of concentration determine the extent of the effect of thought-waves to influence the normal material events. This is a part of occult practices evolved by the Muslim mystics. This is primarily aimed at the alleviation of individual suffering and in effecting general welfare in the world.

The capacity to exercise the power of goodwill and suspicious thought-waves depends upon the number of the persons engaged in the process, their competence, and the extent of duration. This, of course, pertains to the effecting of the common good on a collective basis; whereas in individual cases, as for

example, curing of a sick person, the effort of a single individual is adequate, provided he possesses the requisite qualifications.

Here are some of the occult exercises of the Muslim mystics.

1. How to influence future events? This is done by concentrating the mind and the will on the idea of the things desired to happen. It is necessary that no other thought should cross the mind. The practice should be regular and protracted. Early morning hours or midnight is well-suited for the practice. What is important is that the intensity of concentration should be like the desire for breath in the person who is forced

down inside water. Only those who have advanced well in the practice of concentration, meditation, and cultivation of will power are fit for this exercise.

2 How to remove impending calamities and misfortunes? Visualize the impending calamity in a symbolic form, and then imagine that your will power is resisting it and turning it aside. Concentrate your mind intensely on this idea and repeat the process again and again. The calamity shall be averted.

3. How to know future events? Empty your mind of all thoughts except the fads of expectant waiting for the knowledge of the future event of a particular subject. The expectation should be very acute, goaded by a determined will. Slowly exhale your breath completely and relax your mind in a way that you are not aware of any idea but conscious of mere emptiness. Then inhale slowly and deeply and feel that an intense desire for knowing the future event of a certain subject is filling your entire being. After a while, forget even the process of breathing and concentrate only on this desire. The knowledge of the future events then will be acquired in due course, while awake, or in a dream.

4 How to practise telepathy and mind reading? Empty your mind of all thoughts and concentrate on the mind of some other person so intensely that you become identified with it as it were. After some practice you will find new thought images arise in your mind, which are in fact projected from the other mind on which you were concentrating.

5 How to influence the mind of another? Identify yourself with another mind as in the previous exercise and then imagine that a particular thought of your mind is projected towards the other mind. Again and again force this imagination on the other mind and repeatedly prompt it (by thought waves) to accept this message.

You will then see that the other mind acts up to it.

6 How to cure diseases? Imagine yourself to be the diseased person, and strongly concentrate upon the feeling of all the symptoms of suffering that the diseased person is undergoing. Let no other thought arise in your mind but the acute feeling of his suffering. In due course, the disease will be actually transferred to you, and the diseased man will be completely cured. There is yet another method. Sit by the side of the sick man. Deeply inhale and acutely feel that his disease is entering your body. Then slowly exhale and imagine that the disease is being thrown out of your body on the ground wherein it gets absorbed.

7 How to remove sinful tendencies of a sinner and make him repent? Concentrate on the mind of the sinner so that you become identified with it. Imagine that you are yourself the sinner. Then begin to repent for the sins committed by the other man as though you had committed them yourself. Feel that virtuous qualities are filling your entire being and imagine that yourself being the other person, the virtuous qualities are also filling him. As in the case of the diseased person, you can ask the erring individual to sit before you. While you inhale, imagine that his sinful tendencies are being absorbed into you, and while you exhale, think that those tendencies are being poured down on the ground to be absorbed therein.

The main condition of the above exercises is the ability to identify yourself completely with the mind of the other person by a strong imaginative concentration of thought and will, so that you become identified with it as it were. Preliminary exercises to develop the power of concentration are essential. So also purity of mind, cultivation of will-power, and practice of celibacy.

# Some Aspects of Islamic Mysticism

Dr. Mohammad Hafiz Syed, Ph.D., D.Litt.

In the present day, on account of political upheavals and lack of good understanding Islam unlike other religions is greatly misunderstood in many quarters. People have begun to doubt whether it has any spiritual or moral value or not. There is no religion in this world ancient or modern, revealed by God and sent through His messengers to all mankind which lacks spiritual inspiration and moral vitality Islam is no exception to it. Every religion worth the name has had and should have the exoteric and esoteric sides to it. God and soul remain mere names to such of us as have not learnt to realize their inner intrinsic meaning. It is only by living a life of purity, chastity, truth, non-violence, and austerity that one becomes fit enough to tread the path of spiritual realization, which in course of time enables the aspirant to understand what human soul and God are.

### Divinity of Man

The divinity of man and his close relation with the Supreme Reality are more or less acknowledged by almost all the religions of the world. A devout Muslim who has full faith in the tenets of Islam and its pristine purity has to observe its outer form and, therefore, does not own his divine nature publicly, but when the same devotee learns to dive deeper into his own being and grasps the divine essence in him, he treats the fact of his divinity as a secret over which he can convey only to those who are his fellow-travellers on the path. This knowledge of spiritual wisdom is conveyed from 'breast to breast' and not talked about. This is an old tradition of Islam. The idea underlying this secrecy is that the peace of public mind should not be disturbed. The majority of the people

are expected to lead a moral life as laid down by Islam in their everyday life and acknowledge their relation to God as a humble creature and regard Him as the Source of his being, end Supreme Creator, Master and Patron.

### Oneness of Divinity

The conception of the Unity of God is the pivot round which revolve all other doctrines. The oneness of God is acknowledged by all the schools of mysticism. The pure existence of the Supreme Reality is called *Zat* without any reference to His attributes. It is known through its qualities and attributes called *Ism-e-Sifat*. The neophyte is expected to meditate on Divine attributes and through his constant meditation, prayerfulness, and single-minded devotion, a glimpse of His Beauty, Grace, and Grandeur is vouchsafed to him. The aspirant is enjoined to draw a curtain over his mind against *Masawa* that which is not God and desires nothing but Him and the ability to do His will which is another name of Islam which really and literally means complete resignation and surrender to the will of God—and attitude which is to him the only ruling idea of his life. He owes allegiance to no other being. He bows down before none, kneels down before the Almighty Allah who is his sole Refuge, Benefactor, and Supreme Master.

### Steps to Realization

The first step enjoined by Islam for the attainment of this goal is five times' prayer, a full month's fast once a year, sharing at least one fortieth of one's property with poor and indigent persons, and performing a pilgrimage to Mecca called *Hajj*. The second step is constant repetition of God's name, mentally and verbally, and meditation on Him and His Qualities. In order

fully to succeed in his effort of spiritual realization he has to seek the help and guidance of a Murshid or teacher, to whom he offers his utmost devotion and who in his turn initiates him into the mysteries of divine wisdom and takes him along from one step to another in the sphere of spiritual development. In this connexion three kinds of meditation are practised. The first is called *Tasawwur-e-Sheikh* (meditation on one's teacher); the second, *Tasawwur-e-Rasool* (meditation on the Prophet); the third, *Tasawwur-e-Allah* (meditation on God). Thus an aspirant is led from one step to the other systematically till he attains His grace and an insight into the mystery of Divine Wisdom.

It may be noted here that the methods and stages of spiritual realization laid down by Islam bear close resemblance to some of the schools of ancient Hindu thought.

#### Concept of God

The Muslim mystics are agreed that God is One, Alone, Single, Eternal, Everlasting, Knowing, Powerful, Mighty, Majestic, Generous, Clement, Merciful and Compassionate; that He is qualified with all the attributes and named with all the best names; that since eternity He has not ceased to continue with His name and attributes; and there is no eternal but He and no God besides Him; that He is neither body, nor shape, nor form, nor person, nor element, nor accident. One of the greatest Sufis says, "He is hidden in His manifestation, manifest in concealing. He is outward and inward, near and far; and in this respect He is removed beyond the resemblance of creature. They are agreed that He is neither perceived by the eyes, nor assailed by the thought, that His attributes do not change, and that His names do not alter; that He is First and the Last, the Outward, and the Inward, that He is acquainted with everything

that there is nothing like Him, and that He sees and hears." (*The Doctrine of the Sufis*)

It may be added that all these statements about the Godhead have their Koranic sanctions, too numerous to be quoted here.

The most manifest of existences is the Existence of God. The existence of things is by the light of God. The perception of yourself is the perception of God. He who has understood his *Nafs* (Real Self) has understood his God. The Reality of God is His existence which is really His *Dhat*. The absolute existence has no form, no shape, no limitations, neither beginning nor end; and in spite of this He has manifested Himself in different shapes without any change in His *Dhat*. It is like a person surrounded by mirrors of different sizes and colours and appearing differently in them without any change in His own personality.

Dhannun-e-Misri has said: *Al ilmu fi dhat illahi jehlun*—"Knowledge in God's *Dhat* is ignorance." No prophet or Wali has ever reached or will ever reach that point. The Prophet has said: *Ma nrafaaka haqqa merifetiki*—"I have not known Thee to the extent that Thy knowledge demands." The Muslim mystics believe that God has two aspects: (1) *Tazkiyah*, corresponding to Nirguna Brahman, and (2) *Tashbih*, corresponding to Saguna Brahman. They also believe that He is both the One and the many. He thus joins in Himself contraries and contradictions.

#### God's Attributes

Prophet Mohamed says: "I am from the light of God and all things are from my light." Truly God is beautiful and he loves beauty. Beauty is the personal attribute of the Zat. God created man in His own face. He clothed him with His own attribute of beauty. Man is therefore inclined to the beautiful. God was thus Beauty and

**Love** His beauty was love, and his love was beauty. He was the lover and the beloved at the same time. He saw himself in the mirror of His own beauty. He loved Himself (*La yahibulla*). God does not love "other than Himself."

### The Guide

The Murid (disciple) must observe the *Jamal* (beauty and grandeur of Pir). The Pir's *Jamal* must be reflected in the mirror of the Murid's heart. "Whoever hath seen, me hath seen God," says the Prophet. "The reality of man is the observance of me," says the Prophet.

*Shayk-i-Albar* says that a Murid who seeks another Pir during the lifetime of his own Pir breaks his covenant with God which he made at the time of performing *Bayat* (initiation). The follower of one prophet cannot become a follower of another, during the former's lifetime.

The subjects of *Shaqal* (practices); *Zikr* (repetition of God's name), and *Mursqahe* (deep meditation) are to enshrine the mind not to retain in itself the remembrance of other than God. The soul should not be estranged from the path. After the purity of heart is established, all defects will disappear of themselves.

The *Shaykh* (guide) can be in the west and aware of the condition of his *Murid* (disciple) in the east. The least capacity of the Pir is that he possesses *kshaf-i-qulub* (that is, he reads the mind of his Murids) and *Kshaf-e-qubur* (that he is conscious of the condition of the dead in the grave). If he has not this capacity, it is forbidden for him to accept anyone as his disciple. He should know the past and future conditions of the world. He is the *Khalifa* of God on earth. We have made him, says the Koran, vicegerant on earth. (*Suratu'l-Baqarah* II, 301).

Ahu Yazid-i-Bistami had twelve Pirs in succession. In fact, all Pirs are the mani-

festations of the Name, Al-Hadi. Murid shows extreme respect to his Pir not as in hero-worship but as a mark of his love.

Murids (disciples) are of two kinds: ordinary and special. The Pir instructs them in different ways, according to their aptitudes and temperaments: the one gets ordinary instructions, and the other gets instructions that are kept back from the ordinary Murid. "Sheriat is my word, teriqat is my actions and haqiqat is my personal condition," said the Prophet.

Abu Yazid-i-Bistami and Uthman-i-Khyhari were saying their prayers together; the latter concluded his prayer thus: "O God, grant all that I desire," and the former concluded: "O God, cut off all that I desire." Uthman questioned, "How is this?" Ahu Yazid said: "What has a seeker after God to do with the desires of his *nafs*? He relinquishes all *ma-siwalah* (other than God) and forgets his own existence" (*Irshadat S. Gazar-i-Illahi*).

### Perfection of Man

The question of perfection of man, according to Muslim mystics might be answered in different ways. In a word a perfect man may be defined as a man who has fully realized his essential oneness with the Divine being in whose likeness he is made. This exalted position as enjoyed by prophets and saints and shadowed forth in symbol to others, is the foundation of the Sufi theosophy. Therefore the class of perfect men comprised not only the Prophets, from Adam to Mohamsd but also the superlatively elect eminence the Sufis, that is the persons named collectively *awaliy*. Since the wali or saint is the popular type of perfect man it should be understood that the essence of Muslim saintship as of prophecy, is nothing less than divine illumination, immediate vision and knowl-

ledge of things unseen and unknown when the veil of sense is suddenly lifted and the coenocnus self passes away in the overwhelming glory of one True Light It may be noted that an ecstatic feeling of oneness with God constitutes the Wali It is the end of the path, and prepares the disciple to receive that incalculable gift of Divine grace, which is not gained or lost by anything that a man may do, but comes to him in proportion to the spiritual capacity with which he was created (See *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* by Nicholson, Cambridge Press.)

#### Some Characteristics of the Sufi System

It may be added that Divine Wisdom is obtainable by those alone whose eyes are fixed, like an archer on the arrow, on the object at which he aims and that without purity of purpose and unceasing effort, deliverance or salvation cannot be obtained.

In all ages and in all times men have sought and found truth. They have shunned the way and means of attainment. But men have listened to the message with incredulity and continued the mad pursuit of sense objects. Passion of body and mind governs men and kindles fires of desire, greed, attachment, egotism, and anger. These ensnare and obscure the mind which must be freed and restored to its pristine purity to reflect Truth. According to the

Muslim mystics the seekers of truth therefore concentrate all their strength to drive off every from the mind all sense objects and setting it free from the domination of fear and hate. Some mystics follow the path of knowledge and others the path of devotion, hoping to lose all sense of duality in the supreme experience of love. The world forsakers are something of an enigma to world seers. The truth is that Sufi gives up that which has no real value.

Let me conclude by quoting a passage from a publication titled *The Persian Mystic*. Muslim mystics declare life to be a journey over an unknown path which is as straight and narrow as razur. There is another light but that of faith to guide the seeker no assistance but devotion. The track ahead cannot be seen going is uncertain, and pitfalls await the unwary. The seeker must travel in the dark. He must not cry for a candle to grope in the gloom or seek the rushlight of reason. He must go steadily onward in the hope of reaching a great illumination which awaits him at the journey's end. It would profit little to dwell on the system of Sufism. Volumes have been written in Persian and other languages on the subject. It is not a system really, it is a way of life. It is beyond the range of reason. It cannot be comprehended but it can be realized."

### The Being of Man

The being of man is like a magnet, be full of magnetism of this being if you are of that breath. In our being there are thousands of wolves and hawks. In our being there is the rightness and the unrightness, the fair and the foul.

That trait which is predominant decides the temperament, when gold exceeds copper in quantity, the existence is solid. The quality which is predominant in your being — you will have to rise in the very firm in that same quantity.

(From the "Masnavi," translated by C. E. Wilson)

**Chapter Fourteen**

**SUFISM**

# The Main Features of Sufism

Sri Swami Sivananda

Sufism is liberal Islam with a colouring of mysticism. Sufism is Islamic in origin. It is known as the religion of Love, with Madhurya Bhava, based on the Platonic concept of the lover and the Beloved.

The word *Sufi* may be connected with the word *tasawwuf* (woollen garment), or with the Greek word *sophia* (wisdom). The Sufi ascetics are supposed to wear coarse garments, which is indicative of their disapproval of showy ward-robes worn by their worldly-minded co-religionists.

The Mohamedans think that Sufism is indigenous in Islam. Other scholars have traced an Indian origin of or an Indian influence on the Sufi doctrines. Indian mysticism and Oriental Christian mysticism have, no doubt, affected the later developments of Sufism.

Sufism practised in India is a blend of Persian Sufism and Hindu mysticism.

## Sufi Saints

Lal Shahbaz, Mansoor, Shams Tabriz, Sachal, Rohal, Dalpat, Shah Inayat, Shah Latif, Bulleh Shah, Haizir, Rumi, Jami, were all Sufi mystics.

The Sufi ascetics are as liberal and catholic as the Vedantic Sannyasins. They are very devotional, too. Their utterances or sayings have a wonderful directness, freshness, spontaneous loveliness and charm.

The Sufi mystic sees the Lord in all. He experiences cosmic vision. He beholds his Beloved everywhere and in all objects. He has no sense of possesssion. He is free from egoism, lust, greed, anger and pride. He is perfectly passionless and enjoys profound peace and poise. His state is beyond description. He is like the Jivan-muktas, or the liberated sage. He calls the heart as the Palace of the Beloved. He

does not care for dogmas, doctrines, creeds or sects. He has attained Para Bhakti or the supreme state of devotion.

## Doctrines

Asceticism is an essential feature of Sufism. The Sufi consecrates all his acts, physical, mental and spiritual, to the will of God. Unity of existence, brotherhood of men, and self-surrender to the Lord, are the most vital doctrines of Sufism.

In Sufism, God has form. The Sufis recognize His formless aspect, too.

Sufism combines ecstasy and service of man. A Sufi wants to remain in the world and serve humanity, but endeavour in the above worldliness.

The Sufi literature describes the divine experience of ecstasy in a variety of ways such as sweetness, intoxication, perfume, sleep, death. Wine is a symbol of divine intoxication.

For a Sufi, music is a means to ecstasy. Music plays a very important part in Sufi religious exercises. The Sufis worship heartily.

*Nasut* means the finite human qualities. *Lahul* means the infinite qualities of God. Survival of individuality is *baga*. *Fono* means complete annihilation of the lower self or the mystical realization of the union with God. It means dying alive or the sublimation of the ego by annihilating it.

## Sadhana

Concentration, meditation, obedience to a Guru (Pir), poverty, discipline, fasts, penances, recitation of sacred words (Zikr), the use of rosary, rhythmic and controlled breathing, prayer, universal love, non-injury, detachment, introspection, dispassion, purity of heart, and self-control, are the means to attain God or the Beloved, through Divine Grace.

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The Soff aspirat looks to a mirror and concentrate on the Trikuti or the space between the eye-brows in his own reflection in the mirror.

It is very difficult to practise the Bhava of the lover and the Beloved. This sort of Sufi Sadhana proves dangerous in the case of unregenerate, passionate practitioners, and leads to corruption. They mistake the intoxication caused by the drink of wine for Divine Intoxication and indulge themselves in drinking and sensuality. The aspirant should remain under the strict guidance of a Guru during his Sadhana period.

It is the spirit of a doctrine that is of primary importance. Its external forms are of minor value. Likewise, Sufism is to be

accepted in its absolute spiritual form, which is diffusion of the individual self to the Cosmic Self, rather than to its external allegorical allusions.

Hazrat Inayet, who was born in Baroda in 1882, and who was a famous musician, started the Sufi Movement in Europe in 1910. He founded the Sufi Order in California. He initiated the Sufi Order also in England, France, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany and Italy. He passed away in 1927.

Though the goal of life has the one ultimate destination, God or the Supreme Reality, the various paths leading to it are equally important in their own ways. So also is Sufism, which is one of the paths leading to Godhead.

## The Doctrine of Sufism

Sr. Justice K.M. Jawali  
(High Court, Bombay)

The word *Sufi* is related to *sawwaf* one who puts on woollen garments. It is a creed which originated in ancient Persia in the eighth century and represents a revolt against the rigid laws of the wearisome rituals of the orthodox Moslems. So far as the Sufi creed is concerned, it is said to resemble Pantheism ultimately. In religion there is a close connection between Pantheism and Mysticism, and Sufism laterly did develop into Pantheistic mysticism.

The Sufi acknowledges both a Deity, i.e., a Divine Being, and a soul, and aspires to a growing acquaintance such as will culminate in ecstatic devotion to the Divine Being—a love which will so envelop the soul as to dispel all base attractions and desires. For attaining this consummation five stages are laid down: (1) obedience to the Law of God, (2) love

—the attraction of the soul to God, (3) seclusion—meditation on divine subjects or entities, (4) knowledge—metaphysical studies on the nature and the attributes of God, and (5) ecstasy—the emotion brought about by a full comprehension of the divine love and power of God. However, according to a devoted Sufi, no definition can convey to the uninitiated the esoteric meanings attached to these five stages in the progress of the soul.

Most of our Persian poetry has been inspired by the doctrine of Sufism. Hafiz, Saadi, Rumi and a host of other poets have won international fame because of their Sufistic breed of thought in their poetry. Omar Khayyam—whom Fitzgerald has immortalized—is one of them. The second stage, love, and the fifth one, ecstasy, have been the ones on which they centre round. What is the ultimate goal of a struggling

soul in this world? To become one with God, to forget oneself, one's individuality, and to be absorbed in Him. Union is the Goal. It is called *wasi*.

To illustrate this metaphorically, God is portrayed as the Beloved,—*Mashuk*, and the soul, the lover, *nshuk*. Poets point out as a pattern of this state of mind to the attraction to a lamp for a butterfly. Unless the butterfly flies into the flame and becomes conaumed in it, loses itself in it, it is not satisfied. Similarly, unless one reaches an ecstatic state of mind one cannot lose oneself, one cannot forget oneself, and become one with the Reality.

The Sufi cult is all-embracing. It is classless and casteless. Hafiz thus addresses himself :—

Hafiz qar wasi khefi  
Sulh kyun ba khoso am  
Ba Musselman Allah Allah  
Ba Brahman Ram Ram.

"O Hafiz! if thou wouldst have union, then be at peace with the great and the small. Bid welcome to a Muslim with 'Allah, Allah.' Bid welcome to a Brahmin with 'Ram, Ram'."

Sufism came to India along with the

advent of the Mohe medans. Persian poets coming straight from Persia, of course, sang verses called *ghazals* in Persian built literated down along the passage of time to Indian nationals, like Hali and Iqbal and other poets, who reproduced in Urdu, the soul and spirit of the verses of indigenous Persian poets including the *Masnavi*s of Rumi. But the process of filtration did not stop with North Indians where Urdu was the current language. It came down to Gujarat also, where to write of lover and beloved and their travails and their union became the vogue with the late prince-poet Kalapi, the late professor M.N. Durwesh, the late Baba Shaker Kantharia and others. Muslim poets like Shayads and others follow the same vogue, and Sufism in that form is still alive in Gujarat.

Krishna Bhakti resembles the love aspect in Sufism in great many respects. The love of Radha and Krishna seems to echo in the Sufi doctrina.

Indeed, in this material world, spiritual darkness would be relieved by flashes of mystic creeds like Sufism, if more is known about them.

## Sun of Spirits

The sun of spirits has become diffused through the windows, the bodies. When you look at the sun's disk, it is indeed one; but the whose mortal vision is veiled by bodies is in doubt.

The diffusion is entituled by the animal spirit; the human spirit is one essence.

Since God sprinkled His light upon them—His light will never become scattered.

(From the "Masnavi," translated by C.E. Wilson)

# The Gospel of Sufism

Prof. Firoze C. Davar

[Ahmedabad]

The moral instinct is the tendency in man to turn from evil to goodness, from the line of least resistance to a height whose attainment spells labour and pain, but which promises the only true happiness on earth. Religion takes a step further and entertains a passion for goodness for its own sake, and not for utilitarian considerations. Religion finds it impossible to live without goodness, whatever the cost, as the fish finds it impossible to live out of water. Mysticism is the very core of religion and means absorption not merely in goodness but in the source of all goodness, the *sens et origo* and end of all earthly existence. The mystics of the world have certain characteristics in common, helping shape the life led by the masses.

## Mystics

The mystics are the true spiritual aristocrats and they remain self-excluded on the spiritual heights attained by them, which are inaccessible to the normal man. All mystics are monotheists, living in and loving the Almighty: they are pantheists realizing the divine presence everywhere, even in the lowest of His creation. This being so, they ignore evil and unholiness, for their eyes dwell upon the divine in everything, and the divine can never be anything but the beautiful. They are naturally inspired by a sense of world-brotherhood, for to them all life, despite its multiplicity, is a unity, through which runs the silver thread of the divinity that sparkles through all. Mystics can never be violent, for to strike another is to assault the God in him, nay, to hurt another is to hurt one's own self, for it is the same Self that suffuses all creation.

## Origin of Sufism

The various mystic cults that arose in the world disclosed the same characteristic, and Sufism, which appeared soon after the promulgation of Islam, revealed the same distinctive features. The Zarathushtrianism of Iran gave way in the seventh century A.C., to the proselytizing impact of Islam. But both these religions encourage the active, not the ascetic life: they believe in benevolent and disinterested action, not in seclusion, celibacy and prolonged meditation on the Infinite. It should seem strange that such faiths should have created the mystic cult of the Sufis whose ends correspond with but whose means are diametrically opposed to those of the two faiths.

This very fact shows that mysticism is not a monopoly of any one country or race, but is the universal birthright of all: it is a root which seeks its own soil and flowers in every land. Besides, all great prophets, including Zarathushtra and Mohamed, were mystics at heart, ever thirsting for communion with the Infinite. It is consequently not difficult to seek the origin of Sufism in the Zarathushtrian and Islamic faiths, for ideas parallel to those held by the Sufis have ever been anxious to uphold their principles with the help of quotations from the Koran, which are often interpreted allegorically to suit their purpose, for they knew full well that adherence to principles unsanctioned by the Koran would prove disastrous and probably fatal.

## Its Evolution Through External Influences

Sufism grew as we have seen from the Zarathushtrian and Islamic religions but it received its manners from various other

faiths which then prevailed in the East. The Buddhists were silently carrying on their propaganda and were particularly strong in East Iian. The Christians, too, were active in the dissemination of their faith among the various peoples of West Iian. Both these faiths influenced Sufism and confirmed its notions of asceticism, renunciation and meditation on the Infinite.

Sufism was also very largely coloured by Neo Platonist principles so similar to those of the Indian Vedanta that God was the only Reality and that the universe if conceived as distinct from God was illusory. The Neo Platonists held, as did the Sufis, that knowledge as a purely intellectual activity was futile in attaining the ultimate Truth, which could only be realized by absorption and identity through trance and ecstasy not through logic and philosophy. Lastly, the Sufis had something to learn from the Gnostics who were believers in the gnosis or occult knowledge without which, as they claimed man who had been forgetful of his divine origin, would never be liable to establish his identity with the Infinite. Thus though the forms of Sufism remained Iranian, the Sufi mind was shaped and coloured by constant contact with different faiths and philosophies.

#### Fundamental Approach

The pivotal idea of Sufism is that a man must become God in order to know God; the Sufis thus emphasize not knowing but being.

There are some scholarly Sufis, but even they take their final stand not on knowledge but on their identification with God in blessed moments of trance and ecstasy which can teach them more of the ultimate Reality than all the sages can. They are as indifferent to the personal will as to knowledge, for they invariably prefer devotion to action, leaving to reason. They arrive at their truths immediately through

intuition, not by the slow process of science or the gradual dialectic and logical procedure. They are convinced of the validity of their truths which however they are unable to prove. Even when they differ from the masses, or from one another, the Sufis are completely tolerant in their outlook for they hold that God could be realized in the K'ahs as well as in the idols, shrines. Such a measure of tolerance would indeed be rare in the average Muslim mind. Realizing as they do, the divine presence everywhere, they are imbued with a sense of love and brotherhood for all creation which to them is but a manifestation in different form and degree of the Supreme Being.

#### Spiritual Disciplines

Identification with the Supreme, though consummation is devoutly to be wished is not however easy of achievement till the Sufi has complete mastery over his carnal appetites by an unusual measure of self-control uathikah by the masses. Hence the Sufis reacquaint the world practices self-mortification and an ascetic life, associated with abject poverty and sometimes with celibacy. Many of them practise Zikr or constant repetition of a sacred word till they fall into a death like trance, or they keep on dancing in a mystic whirl during which is revealed to them 'the light that never was on sea or land.'

These believers in universal oneness naturally scoff at caste distinctions, these introverts seem to have nothing in common with the extroverts of ordinary life. These believers in the cult of absolute faith have a light-hearted disregard for the forms and conventions of institutional religion and they are often found to ridicule the hypocrisy of priests who sometimes sacrifice spiritual ends for earthly gains. They ignore their own will which they identify with the Lord's and are as

Sufi preceptor to North India was Makhdum Sayyad Ali al Hujviri, who later on departed from his native place Hujvir and settled and died at Lahore in 1072 A.C. He was the author of the well known Sufistic work *Kashf ul Ma'jub* (Unveiling of the Veiled).

The grand Chishti school of Sufis in India is best represented by Khaja Muinuddin Chishti (died 1236 A.C.) whose tomb at Ajmer still annually attracts vast crowds of devoted followers from all over India. Another great Indian Sufi was Nizamuddin Auliya (preceptor of the well known poet Amir Khusru Dabhlavi of the 13th century). Shaikh Salim Chishti was the preceptor of Akbar who had such implicit faith in him that his (Akbar's) son known in history as Jahangir was named Salim after the Sufi saint. Even members of the royal family lend a willing ear to the Sufis the best instances being that of Shah Jahan's children Jahanara Begum and Dara Shikuh. The latter was the author of *Majma ul Bahri* (Co-fluence of Two Streams—Hinduism and Islam). Dara's preceptor was the God intoxicated nude Iranian Sufi Sarmed who was executed by Aurangzah's orders.

The Sufi creed is seen to be active even in Gujarat, where lived the great Sufi Sayyad Burhanu din Abu Muhammad Abdallah Bukhari known as the Qutbi Alam who died and was buried in 1453 A.C. at Valsi near Ahmedabad. One of his twelve sons was Sirajuddin Abul

Barkat Sayyad Muhammad celebrated by the name of Shah Alam. He was immensely popular in Ahmedabad where his shrine is annually visited by large numbers of devoted admirers. As may be expected Sufism prevailed even in Sind where Shah Latif was noted as an eminent Sufi as well as poet the other Sufis of Sind being Shah Inayat and Lal Shabaz. Thus the unarmed Sufis carried the non violent gospel of the Spirit to India to help those who cared to profit by their preachings.

Sufism in Iran began gradually to decline after the rise of Safavi power early in the sixteenth century. We are living in times distinctly unfavourable to the growth of mysticism. The increasing tempo of rationalism, the spread of machinery, the houodless progress of science, blind pursuit of wealth, the ceaseless struggle for existence, the aggressive attitude of bellicose nations even in times of peace—are factors which are ill in accord with the calm and tranquillity needed in mysticism. Yet mysticism is an ever green plant and is sure to shoot up in Iran or in India or anywhere else in the world where a pious heart distracted by cares and worries may resolve to revoke his earthly bondage, renounce his cherished possessions and seek through meditation and trance that source of supreme happiness foreseen by prophets and celebrated in songs by poets but attained only by a few blessed souls since the dawn of civilization.

### A Prayer from the Koran

My Lord! Bestow on me wisdom and join me to the just and give me a good name among posterity and make me one of the heirs of the garden of delight and forgive my taibah, and not me not to shame on the day when mankind shall be raised up the day when neither wealth nor children shall avail as to him who shall come to God with a sound heart.

O Our Lord! In Thee we trust, to Thee do we turn. To Thee we shall come back at last.

—service of the sick and other people. They came home in the evening and had their food and then they slept. When he was about to leave Swami Vivekananda said to them : "You are all so good. I have watched you work day after day and you are very good here. Still all the four of you have one wife : now, how is it possible for you to do such a thing as that?" You know what they did ? They opened their eyes in surprise and asked : "What shall we do, then?" Vivekananda said : "Each one should have a wife of his own." You know the reply they gave ? They said : "Oh, so down in the plains you are so selfish that each has a wife of his own ?" Swami Vivekananda got the lesson of his life. He learnt that the code of morals is a matter of convenience. Each society gets used to certain ways and describes them as good and desirable.

The second thing that he has discovered when he visited one of the Princes of Kathiswad, who helped him in the affair of going to America. He lived for a short time with that Prince. On one occasion the Prince had a singing girl in the Palace. There was going to be a music performance. The Prince asked Swami Vivekananda to attend it. Swami Vivekananda did not want to attend. He refused, he told the Prince : "When I was a boy, even then, in Calcutta, my rule was that if I passed along the road and if on that side in some house there is some dramatic or music performance I would not move along that side of the road. I will cross over to the other side. That was my attitude and the expression of my attitude towards these parties. So, I will not attend."

The Prince pressed him hard, and he ultimately went. That singing girl came to know that Swami Vivekananda did not want to come; she sang a song (probably

it was Surdas's) : "iron can be used for any purpose; it can be made into a sword which may cut people or it may be made into a plough which helps cultivation of food-grains. But to the philosopher's stone the cutting sword and the plough are the same. It touches either of them; and the iron of which the two are made is converted into gold. So, to You, God, all human beings are the same. The singing-girl or a great saint both are alike to you. You merely look at them; and they are converted into Yourself." That is the second lesson that he got. Thereafter, he never spoke of morality in his old fashion.

#### The Entity "I"

Any science student knows that he has got to give up the idea of good and evil, but just describe the things as they are. You set up a standard; if that standard changes, the ideal changes, the order changes; and that which you consider evil becomes good and that which you consider good becomes evil.

More than that the difficult point is really this 'I.' If God is the only agent, what about this 'I'? With regard to this, I know that there are any number of illustrations, in the outside life which show that all those boundaries, entities, are created which are not real, they exist only for the time being. Take for instance the light of the sun. It is moving with a certain speed. If it meets water or glass it then cannot move as far as before; and an image of the sun is created there. A new creation like that is a very common occurrence. This exists only for the time being.

Take another example. On the top of a hill there is always a white cloud—a permanent appearance. But it is not permanent. It is very temporary; it does not exist even for a second, every second it is a new cloud. The cloud comes running along the strand there he has received

so obstruction. It moves upwards and gets into the other one. But as the cloud moves along the air, on the other side, there is a change of temperature, and it evaporates entirely, we don't see it at all. Again a new cloud is produced. Every moment a new cloud is produced and it disappears. Still we feel that there is a permanent cloud on the top of the hill.

Similarly, this entity 'I' does not exist all the time. We are not all the time conscious of ourselves. As soon as I am entirely conscious of myself, thinking stops. If I want to think, I must forget myself for the time being. Self consciousness comes into existence only for the moment when thought stops, or thought decreases or increases. Those who have done some revision, when we go from one step to another, sometimes there is an obstruction. We are not able to go further, because I feel I am doing something like after a little while that point I cross over something occurs to me and I know what step is to be taken and my thought again begins to run. Afterwards 'I' ceases to exist and the revision goes on. This 'I' exists only for the time being.

#### Desire

In the matter of joy we see that when our desire is fulfilled, we get some joy on account of the fulfilment of the desire, and we attribute the joy to the fulfilment of the desire. If we watch ourselves we will find that the joy is really our own inner nature which becomes covered up by desire. The movement from one state to another which we call desire stops all joy, when that desire ceases for a moment, when it is fulfilled we become conscious of our inner nature just for a moment. We know that desire is a continuous process, only for a moment does it cease. In that moment we know our inner nature. Those moments are very, very few—when

we are conscious of our real inner being; otherwise all along we go on trying, trying, and trying, and there is always desire, desire and desire, and only when a desire is fulfilled at that moment do we get a feeling that we are peaceful and happy. Similarly, in the matter of thought, when our thinking stops,—and the purpose of Sadhana is to stop all thought forever, altogether—for that moment that 'I' which is one with God, becomes conscious, and only for that moment that 'I' is really there. This 'I' of which we talk does not exist at all—the 'I' which is supposed to have done this or that does not exist. His place is, we do not exist at all.

#### Process of Thought Control

Another important point with regard to Sufism is—how to stop this thinking. All our Sadhanas is for the purpose of stopping our thinking. Then we become aware that Self awareness is the final stage we have to reach. Awareness or Consciousness, without thinking seems to be the final condition. How to stop thinking? Try to stop breathing, or control it makes it slower, then thinking becomes slower. Try to repeat God's Names. It is called Zikr in Sufism. Zikr is repeating God's Names. Repeat any name you like. Keep on repeating it all the time. One example is given to illustrate this. Mow is a piece of dirty cloth with which all the dirty vessels are cleaned. I have heard it said that this Zikr is like Mow, all evil thoughts disappear by repeating God's Names.

#### Action and Reaction

All our action is performed by the eyes—not by words nor by hands (the work that is done by the hands and by the tongue is not action, but reaction). You can by knowing a person or living with him for a few days, see what he will do. We can judge people with reference to their

percentage end way of thinking. Then you can't blame them for the actions they do. If your judgment is that he must have done that, then how can you blame him. It is the result of his past and he has no control over it. Yet we judge people and blame people also. Our ordinary activity is not free at all; it is a reaction.

One thing leads to another. Only on rare occasions do we act. That action is not such as would come out as a result of any set of motives. I have known in my life only a few actions, so far as I am concerned, of this type: when I am not able to say how that action came about. Once it has come about, the intellect sits on it and breaks it into pieces and it can give the motives or the reasons for a particular activity or decision. Before the decision, one can't say how it came about. The decision is often such as would be opposite to the ordinary, usual motive that controls a man's conduct. Usually, you may be able to say "I will do this" I can refer to my past, the traditions of my family, my living with certain people, and come to the conclusion "I believe on this occasion most do like this." When the time comes I do absolutely the contrary thing, and that happens to be usually the best. Though it appears to be, for the time being, opposed to the motive with which society decides things, and though apparently evil, it works out beautifully. Specially when things are confused when conditions are such that you really don't know what to do then you get up in the morning and do something and it happens to work out well. This real action is possible only with the real "I."

#### "Witness Attitude"

That is the best point with regard to Sufism; but I feel that it is true of every holistic teaching, that thought can be

controlled in the best way, not controlled but wholly dissolved, that thought can't exist if you quietly look at it. Don't condemn it but look at it. Let it come. What happens then is this. In every thought there are in the first place the details of the word and then there is the consciousness, self-consciousness. If you keep yourself conscious and keep consciousness to yourself entirely and try to become as fully and deeply aware of the thought as possible the third drops; so it does not exist. I have known it to some slight extent; therefore, I am able to speak of it. Don't think that the thought is bad or evil. It comes. Keep it. If you are afraid of it then it grows on you. If the thought is sweet, we identify ourselves with it and are carried away. Leaving that sweetness aside or condemnation aside, simply and quietly look at it; it drops. The condition of the mind that you get into is very sweet peaceful; it is naturally relaxed—it is unconscious and yet relaxed. The word for it is 'beautiful.' I know for certain that thoughts dissolve only in that way. If you can keep it for a long time, it is a great Sadhana.

#### The Way of Love

Then comes the relationship of the Guru and the Sishya. We know about it. In Sufism also the relationship is exceedingly sweet. We see there that the Guru loves the Sishya; it is not the Sishya who loves the Guru. Of course the Sishya loves the Guru and so is attached to him. But the love of the Guru for the Sishya is forty times or intense. The Sishya does nothing, the Guru looks after everything not only the real thing (the Sishya) but even these ordinary superficial things that we describe as welfare. Outside, beside just now, hereafter—everything is done by the Guru. When one realizes that, what one can feel you can imagine

and as you feel that way, the ego disappears. You feel he is doing everything, the feeling is one of wonder. You look round and see that he has done everything and you wonder "Even that he has intended to!" The result is slowly the 'I' disappears, that probably is the awesomest way, the way of love.

## The Bahai Faith

Sri S A. Rahman

The world engrossed in materialistic and sceptical orthodoxy, the only hope for its redemption—a redemption not from a birth to come but the redemption of the social order, the liquidation of its social evils and the birth of an era of welfare and prosperity, can take effect through a lasting approach—an approach that is based not on a transitory, mechanical attitude of life which can wither away with time, but a consistent approach a transcendental appeal which leaves an indelible mark on the soul of a race.

What is that? What is that one factor that has given solace to the soul of man through ages? That one force which fed men made of flesh and blood to surrender their all, their worldly possessions and finally even their hardly self-unhesitatingly without a murmur for a cause that was more real to them than their own self it was the call of the Spirit!

Whatever the pontiffs, the Mullahs and priests may say this call of the Spirit was one and the same throughout the ages whether it emanated from Mohammed Christ, Krishna Zoroaster or Nanak or Baha'u'llah. In one God's one voice, it would appear to be a fantasy to think of two parallel truths or two manifestations of God, either not collaborating to their missions or leaving behind cloisters to raise fires so as to lead humanity through squabbles of rival communities or groups. That would be to say the least, ha atheistic Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Bahai World Faith wrote, "These sanctified mirrors, these surions of ancient glory

(prophets and saints of all ages) are one and all the exponents no earth of Him who is the central orb of the universe its essence and ultimate purpose. From Him is derived their Sovereignty... Know then assuredly that the central teaching of all the prophets of God is one and the same. Their unity is absolute God the Creator saith There is no distinction whatsoever among the bearers of my message. They shall have but one purpose, their secret is the same secret To prefer one in honour to another to exalt certain ones above the rest is—in no wise to be permitted. Every true prophet hath regarded his Message as fundamentally the same as the revelation of every other prophet gone before him."

Enshrouded in this basic noisy was born the Bahai Faith a century ago in Iran. Its forerunner, the 'Bah' was martyred by a firing squad his prophet Baha'u'llah imprisoned for practically a lifetime and thousand souls of his followers were done to death by the fanatical orthodoxy which could not stand this broad vision of life.

But today, in a world divided against itself the Bahai Faith still continues to present to mankind an order which while harmonizing the spiritual entities of the past presents a comprehensive plan covering all aspects of life and in keeping with the necessities of the present day. Beginning from the individual's code of ethics it enunciates a spiritualized social concept of life, not in any way making it idealistic to an extent to make it imprac-

ticable, or mechanical and materialistic to a level that would bereft it from the realms of the Spirit.

On the individual plane, it certifies the basic ethical values propounded by all the past prophets and as such offers a code of morals of which any citizen can very well be proud. On the social plane, it views the universe as one unit and considers all racial, ethical, national or communal prejudices as something quite out of date. It says goodbye to kings and pontiffs and visualizes a crystal clear form of a real democracy in which the individual's entity is not stultified. On the economic horizon, it propagates a comparative spirit in which accumulation of wealth in a few hands in the face of the dire poverty all around has been declared as sacrilegious, and this message the Bahai Crusaders for truth

are today promulgating through 3000 Centres spread out almost all over the world.

To this Parliament of Religions which is being held at Rishikesh, our Assembly therefore sends the heat of good-wishes. The necessity of the day is a harmonious unification of mankind in all its multifarious aspects with an inherent cohesive spiritual approach, for without that, any purely mechanical effort, will fail to the ground. With open arms, therefore, we invite both the East and the West to study and see for themselves whether the Bahai Faith offers a nucleus for such an organic union of all the religions. We believe in the principles of complete search for truth and therefore our invitation is without any reservation, for to us, verily Truth can be one alone.

## Twelve Ideals of the Bahai Faith

Sri Abdul Baha

1. Bahaullah addressed Himself to the world of humanity saying, "Ye are off the leaves of one tree and the fruits of one orchard." That is, the world of existence is no other than one tree, and the nations or people are like unto the different branches or limbs thereof, and human individuals are similar to the fruits and blossoms thereof.

2. No man should follow blindly his ancestors and forefathers. Nay, each must see with his own eyes, hear with his own ears, and investigate truth in order that he may find the Truth; whereas the religion of forefathers and ancestors is based upon blind imitation—man should investigate the truth.

3. The foundation underlying all the divine precepts is one reality. It must

needs be reality, and reality is one, not multiple. Therefore the foundation of the diverse religions is one.

4. Every religion is the greatest divine indulgence, the cause of life amongst men, the cause of the honor of humanity, and a productive of life everlasting amongst humankind. Religion is not for enmity or hatred. It is not for tyranny or injustice. If religion be the cause of enmity and rancor, if it should prove the cause of alienating men, assuredly, no religion would be better.

5. Religion must be reasonable; it must agree perfectly with science, so that science shall sanction religion and religion sanction science. The two must be brought together, indissolubly, in reality. Down to the present day it has been customary for

man to accept a thing because it was called religion, even though it were not in accord with human reason.

6 This is peculiar to the teachings of Babauallah for all former religious systems placed men above women. Daughters and sons must follow the same form of study and the same basic education. Having one course of education promotes unity among mankind.

7 It is established that all the prophets of God have come to unite the children of men and not to disperse them and to put in action the law of love and not enmity. Consequently, we must throw aside all these prejudices—the racial prejudice, the patriotic prejudice, the religious and political prejudices. We must become the cause of unity of the human race.

8 All men and nations shall make peace. There shall be universal peace amongst governments, universal peace amongst religions, universal peace amongst races, universal peace amongst the denizens of all nations. Today is the world of humanity the most important matter is the creation of universal peace. The realization of this principle is the crying need of the time.

9 All mankind should partake of both knowledge and education, and this partak-

ing of knowledge and of education is one of the necessities of religion. The education of each child is obligatory. If there are no parents, the community must look after the child.

10 Like the rich man, the poor man must have a home, be provided with sustenance, and not be in want. Until this is effected happiness is impossible. All are equal in the estimation of God, their rights are one and there is no distinction for any soul, all are protected beneath the justice of God.

11 An international auxiliary language shall be adopted which shall be taught by all the schools and academies of the world. A committee appointed by national bodies shall select a suitable language to be used as a means of international communication and that language shall be taught in all the schools of the world in order that everyone shall need but two languages: his national tongue and the international auxiliary language. All will acquire the international auxiliary language.

12 A universal tribunal under the power of God and under the protection of all men shall be established. Each one must obey the decisions of this tribunal in order to arrange the difficulties of every nation.

### Praise of God

God! There is no god but He, the living, the self-subsisting, neither slumber setteth Him nor sleep. His whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is on the earth! Who is he that can intercede with Him but by His own permission? He knoweth what is present with His creatures and what is yet to beset them, yet caught of His knowledge do they comprehend save what He wills! His throne reacheth over the heavens and the earth, and the upholding of both becometh Him out and He is the High, the Great!

"God is the Patron of believers. He bringeth them out of darkness into light."

(From the Koran translated by J. M. Rodwell)

**Chapter Fifteen**

**SIKHISM**

# Sikhism

Sri Swami Sivananda

The cardinal doctrines of Sikhism are the unity or oneness of God and the brotherhood of man.

Sikhism was founded in the fifteenth century by Guru Nanak, the first of Gurus born in Talwandi (now Nankana Sahib) in Sheikhupura in the district of Lahore in Punjab. He made no attempt to build up a new religion. He tried to have a unifying religion to embrace both Hindus and Mohammedans. He insisted on the worship of one God, the Creator, and the Supreme Ruler, Who is all and apart from Whom any thought of individual existence is only Maya.

Guru Nanak invented Gurumukhi language, which is the corrupt form of Hindi. It contains 53 alphabets. The whole Granth Sahib is in Gurumukhi language.

Guru Nanak tried his level best to join the Hindus and the Musalmans in one league of love to God and service to man.

Love to God and the teacher is the very basis and the very root of Sikhism. In its philosophy it is Hindu. It is reformatory in its nature. Sikhism is a movement essentially of Bhakti. Guru Nanak taught that one can obtain his emancipation through the name of Hari. Guru Govind gave to the Sikhs their great military organization. He was a great military organizer.

The word 'Sikh' simply means a disciple. It is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Shishya' or disciple. Sikhism enjoins that obedience to the Guru brings release from future birth and the attainment of eternal bliss and immortality.

A Sikh is admitted to the privilege of the Community only when he receives the Pahul (baptism). When he is baptized, he adopts the five 'Kakas'—the 'Kes' (uncut hair), the 'Kachch' (short drawers), the 'Kara'

(iron bangle), the 'Kripa' (steel dagger) and the 'Kangha' (small comb worn in the hair).

The Sikhs are divided into many sub-sects, viz., Udasi, Nirmalas and the Akalis. The Udasis are an ascetic order of the Nanakshahi Sikhs. The Nirmalas are celibates. They are also an ascetic order of the Nanakshahis. The Akalis are the most fanatical of all the Sikh sects. They wear a distinctive dress of blue and a black turban.

The Sikh religion dates from 1470. The number of Sikhs in India is 4,325,000.

A Diwan is a meeting of Sikhs held in connection with religious matters to decide on any definite line of action.

## Khalsa

Guru Govind Singh said in an assembly: "I want the heads of five Sikhs." The whole assembly was struck with wonder. Daya Ram, a Khatri Sikh of Lahore came forward and said "O Guru! I offer my head to Thee, O true Lord." The Guru took him inside a big Shamiana (tent). The blow of a sword was heard and streams of blood came gushing out of the tent. Thereupon, the Guru came out and took his seat with the blood-stained sword in hand. He then cried out for another victim. Then Dhannai, a Jat, came forward and offered his head. He too, was taken inside and dealt with like Daya Ram. Then Himmah, a water-carrier, came forward and offered his head. Afterwards Sahib Ram, a harbar, and Mokham Chand, a cloth-printer, came forward and offered their heads.

Then the Guru came out with the five persons equipped like himself. Five goats which were concealed inside were only killed. Guru Govind Singh then explained the true principles of his faith to the

selected five persons. The chosen five were arrayed in white clothes with short breeches, sword in hand. They stood before the Guru repeating the name of the Lord "Vah Guru". The Guru, then took some fresh river-water in an iron basin. He put some Batashas (hollow lumps of sugar) in it and stirred the mixture with a double-edged sword, repeating certain hymns in deep meditation and declared that he had prepared the Amrit, nectar or water of life. He sprinkled it on the five men around him and gave it to each of them to drink. He proclaimed them as the Khalsa, the pure, and commanded them to add to their names the epithet of 'Singh,' the Lion. These are the first initiated disciples.

Those chosen five were called as 'the five Pyara' or the five beloved. They enjoyed the foremost place among the Khalsas and served as the Guru's apostles for the propagation of righteousness.

#### Amrita or Baptism of the Khalsa

The mere keeping of long hair does not make one a Khalsa. A Khalsa must be initiated with Amrita (nectar), in order to infuse both moral and spiritual strength to him.

The initiate girds himself with a sword. He stands in front of the Holy Scripture and repeats the name of Vahguru all the time. He should have long hair (Kes), short breeches (Kachh), a comb (Kangha), iron bracelet (Kara), double-edged sword (Kirpan).

Fresh water from the river is brought. The iron baste should be acruputously clean. Batashas are put in the baste. The basin is filled with water. Batashas are rubbed by the double-edged sword (Khanda) with repetition of Vahguru. The hymns are recited such as Japji, etc. The members who prepare the Amrita must be orthodox Singhs, of pure life. They are five in number.

Five handfuls of Amrita are sprinkled over the eyes and face. Five handfuls are poured into the hair or the head of the initiated. After the initiation ceremony is over, the initiated is made to understand himself to have baan rehora with Guru Govind Singh his spiritual father and Mata Sahib Kaur, as his spiritual mother. The initiated enters into a new life, a new birth. The initiated are given Karah Parshad (Hofwa made of flour, ghee and sugar).

#### Granth Sahib

The Sacred Scriptures or holy Granths are two. One was compiled by the fifth Guru, Guru Arjue Dev. The other is a collection of miscellaneous hymns of the tenth Guru, Guru Govind Singh and of translations of Saaskrit books, made by various others under the orders of Guru Govind Singh. A part of the Granth contains an abstract of the Rameyan, and the Bhagavat.

The Holy Granth, popularly known as the Adi Granth, contains the hymns of the first five Gurus with a few selections from the hymns of different contemporary saints. These were all collected, arranged and formed into a volume called "Guru Granth Sahib" by the fifth Guru.

The teachings of Guru Nanak are contained in the first book of the Adi Granth. Nanak was succeeded by Angad, Amaradas, Ram Das, Arjun, Har Govind, Hr. Rat, Har Krishan, Tej Bahadur and Govind Singh in turn. These are the ten Gurus or Preceptors of the Sikhs.

An Akhaad Path means the uninterrupted reading of the Granth Sahib by a party, generally 4 or 5 of orthodox Sikhs, who are known as Pathis. The reading has to be completed within 48 hours. Akhaad Paths are performed on special occasions such as marriages, deaths, sickness, etc. This corresponds to the Akhand Path of Rameyana, Bhagavat and Gita of the Hindus.

Amitsar near Lahore is the sacred city of the Sikhs as Benares is to Hindus. There is the famous Golden Temple in the City where the Adi Granth Sahib is kept and worshipped. This is the biggest and the most important Gurudwara of the Sikhs and has in its front the famous and most beautiful tank called the "Nectar Tank" or "Amrit Sarovar" from which the city derives its name. It is regarded with great reverence and devotion and is said to possess miraculous properties. All Sikhs believe that anyone who bathes in it with devotion is at once healed of all afflictions, physical, mental and moral.

#### Main Principles of Sikhism

The following are the main principles on which Sikhism is based:

- (i) Belief in the One true God.
- (ii) Implicit surrender of one's will to God.
- (iii) The practice of righteousness and rectitude.
- (iv) Fatherhood of God and universal brotherhood of man.
- (v) No worship, but of the Lord God.
- (vi) To work in good faith as a duty imposed by God, abandoning fear for a bad result and giving up hope of reward for a good result.

Teachings of Guru Nanak

#### I

Guru Nanak is a great prophet of Peace. Guru Nanak's teaching breathes the purest spirit of devotion. He takes the view of the Upanishads that there is one Brahman. He declares that the creation is only Maya and all things come into being by Maya, the power of the Lord. He says that the Jiva or the individual soul is the same in essence as the Supreme. He admires the doctrines of Karma and reincarnation. He says that it is difficult to get a human birth and salvation can be attained in human birth only.

Vahe Guru is the Mantra which a Sikh repeats. The meaning of this Mantra is "Wonderful is Guru" or 'Congratulations to the Great God.' Whenever a Sikh greets another Sikh he says "Sat Sri Akal." This means 'God is True.'

The Gurus lay great stress on the importance of prayer. Guru Nanak says 'Na'ak, with the Lord it is prayer alone that succeeds and not demands or commands.' They say with great emphasis that nothing can be achieved by man without the grace of the Lord. Through prayer and self-surrender alone the divine grace descends on the devotee.

The Sikh Gurus teach that man should learn to live in accordance with the will of the Lord and resign everything to the will of the Lord, without grumbling or murmur. He must beg for His kindness, grace and mercy. He must approach God in a spirit of true humility. This is the only way to eternal bliss and everlasting peace.

The seeking of the Divine will as your own and the obtaining of the divine grace through self-surrender are the two central doctrines of Sikhism.

There should be no difference of caste, no difference between men and women in the community of the Sikhs. All are brothers. All are equal.

#### II

Devotion to God is the essence of all teachings. Without Bhakti all search is vain and fruitless.

The Lord was in the beginning. He is through all ages. He shall be the One, who lives for ever.

He is beyond thought. If even the minds of men should think for ages and ages they cannot conceive Him. His will is indefinable. All manifest things are forms of His will.

Great is His will. Make His will your own. Only then you can find Him. This

is the only way. There is no other way.

Each man shall stand alone His own actions shall avail after the life on the earth.

There have been several Ramaa, Krishnas and Rascals. They did not gain Praapti without Bhakti.

Nothing is outside the sphere of His will. Seek His will. This is to live for ever. If you see the universal Will and work, then you can never say 'It is I.'

The wind is the Guru or preceptor; the water, the father; and the great earth, the mother.

The daya and eights are the two nurses in whose bosom the whole world is playing.

Good and bad acts shall be read out by Dharmaraj and everyone shall be judged and meted out his due either at once or at a later time.

Those who have fixed their minds on God have finished their labour and departed.

Lord's name (Nam) is the substance of which all life is made. His Nam enlarges the heart and makes it limitless. Meditate on His Nam in the morning with devotion.

O Man! Sing His greatness Believe in Him. Fill your hearts with His love and His greatness. You will be freed from pain and delusion. You will obtain the joy of freedom.

Forget not thy Maker, the All-Giver, the All-Sustainer, the Creator.

Be self-contained and centred in thy own Self.

Thy bread be knowledge of God. Be kind to all. There is the same throbbing of life in all hearts. All things are strung in the string of one life. All power of the earth and Heaven are His.

Lord's Nam is true. All move by His will. He wills as He pleases. None can undo His will. The Lord is the King of kings, the Absolute.

### Japji

It is the great morning prayer of the Sikhs. It is the most sacred collection of the hymns of Guru Nanak. It is the foundation-stone on which the Sikh Scripture, the Holy Guru Granth Sahib is built. The hymns were arranged in their present form by the 5th Guru, Sri Guru Arjun Deva. It contains the Mool-Mantra, 38 Pancha or steps or rungs of the ladder and a Sloke which forms the epilogue or conclusion. The Granth Sahib, the Scripture of the Sikhs, begins with Japji. The rest of the Granth Sahib is an exposition of the philosophical doctrines and teachings contained in the Japji. It shows the way for reaching God. Sohila is repeated at the end.

In the Japji Guru Nanak has given a lucid, lucid and beautiful description of the stages through which the individual soul must pass, in order to attain eternal peace. There are five stages or Khandas viz., (1) Dharma Khand, (2) Gian Khand (3) Sharan Khand (4) Karam Khand (5) Sach Khand.

The first stage is Dharma Khand. This is the realm of Duty or Action. Everyone should perform his duties well. Everyone will be judged according to his deeds. His own deeds alone shall avail after his life on this earth.

The second stage is Gian Khand. This is the realm of Knowledge. Man's resolve to do his duty is strengthened now by the knowledge that it is by performing their duty that great souls like Rama and Krishna have attained the shade of everlasting peace.

The soul passes from the Gian Khand to Sharan Khand. This is the Realm of Ecstasy. In this region Dharma becomes natural and spontaneous. It becomes part and parcel of one's nature. It becomes an ingrained habit. There is holy rapture in this realm. There is nothing else but Beauty.

From Sharan Khand the Soul passes to Karam Khand. This is the Realm of Power. He acquires power and spiritual strength on account of the character built in the previous three stages. He becomes invincible. His beauty is ineffable. The fear of death vanishes. He is freed from the round of birth and death. There are God-intoxicated saints here who are in a state of supreme Bliss.

Then he passes onto the final realm, Such Khand, the Abode of Truth, which is near Karam Khand. Here reigns the Formless One. Here the aspirant becomes one with the Supreme Lord. He has attained Godhood. His will has merged in the Cosmic Will or the Divine Will.

This is the Mool Mantra of Japji—

### Words of Wisdom

1. By hearing the Name of God a blind man finds his way. By hearing the Name the unfathomable becomes fathomable.

2. Covetousness is a dog, falsehood a sweeper, food obtained by deceit carrion.

3 All fear has departed from those who meditate on the fearless God.

4. Eat little, sleep little, have love, mercy and forbearance.

5. God will not ask man of what race he is. He will ask what he has done.

6. Devotion is not a ragged garment, nor stain, nor ashes, nor shaven head, nor sounding horns.

7. Of all devotion the best is to utter the name of God.

8. Make thy body the field, good works the seeds, irrigate with God's name. Make thy heart the cultivator. God will germinate in the heart and thou shalt obtain the glory of Nirvana.

9. The highest duty of all is to repeat the Name of the one God.

10. Always the Lord should be remembered.

Ek Omkar Sat Nam Kartarpurukh  
Nirbhaya Nirvair Akal Amurt, Ajooni,  
Saibhang Guru Pherad Jap sach Jugad  
sach Hebbi sach Naak Hoaihhi sach, etc.

There is but one God. His name is true. He is the Creator. He is free from fear and mortality. He is beyond time. He is immortal, unborn, formless and self-existent. He can be realized by the Grace of the Guru. He existed before the beginning of the world. He existed before the beginning of the Yugas. He exists now, and says Nanak—He shall exist for ever.

This contains the essence of the Upanishads or Vedanta of the Hindus.

May the blessings of Sri Guru Nanak, the great Prophet of peace, be upon you all!

berad. Put and keep him within thy heart.

11. Thou shalt not go to heavens by lip-service. It is by the practice of Truth than shalt be delivered.

12. Worldly goods lasts four or six days. Every one goes and leaves them behind. Nothing is taken. Collect such things that do not perish.

13. Repeat the name of God. The impurities of your heart will vanish.

14. Make the word the garden tree, plant it in good soil (the heart) and irrigate it with love.

15. There is no greater penance than patience, no greater happiness than contentment, no greater evil than greed, no greater virtue than mercy and no more potent weapon than forgiveness.

16. Without service of saints man is a barren rock. In the service of saints he is God.

17. Make mercy thy cotton; contentment thy thread, continence its knot, truth its twist, that would make a thread for the

soul. It will not break or become snuffed or be burnt or lost. Blessed is the man, O Nanak, who goes with such a thread on his neck.

18 As fire is contained in all wood and butter in all milk, so the light of God is contained in everything high and low.

19 He who looks for human support loses both this world and the next. There is but one Giver. The whole world are beggars. They who forsake Him and attach themselves to others lose all their honour.

20 There are four ways by which with the repetition of God's name, men may reach Him. The first is association with the holy persons, the second truth the third contentment and the fourth control of senses. By whichever of these doors a man enters, whether he be a hermit or a householder, he shall find God.

21. Only he who has ceased to love the world can serve God.

Pain is medicine. Worldly pleasure is a disease. When there is such pleasure, there is no desire for God.

## Sikhism: A Universal Approach to Religion

Sri Jitendri Nath Khullar, M.A., B.T.

[Jullundur]

Human society, having its origin in the institution of family, is evolving and progressing towards a definite universal goal. The evolution is distinctly marked in the structure and forces of society—in its institutions and associations, in its communities and castes in its customs and traditions in its taboos and sanctions and also in thought and religion which govern and determine all these. The boundaries of the society conditioned falling and the sphere of society went on widening from a family to a tribe, a clan, a city, a region, a community, a nation and finally to an international society—which is quite visible in the political manifestation of society in the form of empires and multinational federations and confederations. The same trend we find in the sphere of religion. There was a time when each family had its own God and religion. Then came the tribal religions. Even now we find family and tribal religions in some of the backward tracts of Africa, North America, South East Asia and Australia. Regional and national religions appeared on the world

stage after the tribal religions. Judaism, Hinduism and Zoroastrianism represent these. The next stage was multinational religions e.g., Buddhism, Christianity and Islam. These have crossed the boundaries of nations and countries, and have spread in the far and wide corners of the world.

In this process of evolution of religion, naturally and logically the next stage is an all world religion—just as an effort is being made for an all world forum through U.N.O. etc. And Sikhism is a daring step towards that.

Northern India was the most suitable stage where the drama of this universal religion could be played. Ideal conditions were created by the impact of East and West in that region. It was a meeting place of all streams and cross streams of religious thought. Hindu culture had given birth to Brahminism, Buddhism and Jainism. Hebrew culture was the root of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Both these streams of thought came into contact with each other in Northern India under the Great Moons. The influence of the Greek culture was added to these conditions.

through the Persian Shias and South Indian Christians.

The rehearsals for this great drama of a universal religion were going on in the Ibadat Khana (Hall of Prayer) of the Mogul Emperor Akbar the Great at Fatehpur Sikri. Nanak, the destined hero of that drama was making his studies and experiences, travelling far and wide, seeing and discussing with people of all beliefs and creeds and trying to arrive at the ultimate Truth and Reality behind all the conflicting and clashing so-called "Religions of God." And he found soon, after what he was. He raised a voice against the false notion of religion. He waged a war against fanaticism. He was not against any religion; he opposed only the prejudices, general ignorance and false convictions about God and religion. Religion is not this creed or that. It transcends all sectarian prejudices and antagonism. All in the human race has a common fatherhood in God, and is to be brought into one religious fold, not by conversion of men from one religion to another but by making them follow the Divine Path of Truth and Love.

"It is not the birth, profession, wealth or status that makes a man high or low; it is his life, actions, Truth and love that determine his position." Basically all are equal—that was Nanak's belief. He was a prophet of unity and peace. He did not try to create a new religion. He merely made an effort—and a successful one—to synthesize the existing religions.

#### Sikhism: A Synthesis of Religions

More than often it is said that Sikhism is a 16th century edition of Vedanta and this seems to be true also. The language, similes, metaphors used in the 'Guru Granth Sahib' (the Sikh scripture) are predominantly those of Upanishads. We find Upanishadic Truths expressed by Sikh

Gurus in their original tone and depth. The Moonism of Upaishads and the nature of Brahman has been accepted by the Gurus. The very first verse of Guru Granth Sahib clearly shows that. That verse reads "There is but one God, whose name is true. He is the Creator devoid of all fear and enmity, immortal, un朽, self-existent, great and bountiful. Repeat his name. The true one was in the beginning. He was even before the beginning of Yugas. He is now also and Nanak, He shall ever be also." The similarity here is striking.

Similarly, many of the verses of Guru Granth Sahib suggest that Sikhism is a presentation of the Islamic Sufi doctrines in Indian garb. We find at places, a generous use of Persian language and terms. Again, there are some persons who try to prove that Sikhism is based on Buddhism or Christianity and they quote some of the portions of Sikh scriptures to assert their claim.

What does all this show? Nothing but the fact that Sikhism has all the religions at its base. It is a synthesis of all religions. Respecting all faiths, giving a true definition of God, Love and Dharma, it was a universal approach to the greatest necessity of society, viz., Religion. Gurus spoke to people of different regions in their language and that is why we find a synthesis of languages in Gurumukhy, i.e., the language of the Gurus.

It will not be out of place to quote some of the verses of Guru Granth Sahib to show the universality of Sikhism :-

"Love the saints of every faith. Put away the pride and ego. Remember the essence of Religion is meekness and sympathy .."

"Neither the shaved head, nor long prayers, nor recitations or self-torture, nor the ascetic way, but a life of goodness,

and purify amid the temptations of the world—this is religion."

"He who looks on all men as equals, is religious."

The countless sayings can be referred to in order to show that Sikhism is a step towards the universal religion, as the final stage is the process of evolution of religions.

### Sikhism—What It Is?

Sikhism can be translated in its true sense and spirit into the word "Seekerism," "Aspirantism" or "Disciple-ism." Word 'Sikh', is derived from the Sanskrit word "Shishya" meaning a disciple, a seeker or an aspirant. Sikh is a person whose attitude towards the world God and knowledge is that of a true seeker, i.e., ever open-minded, impartial, unprejudiced, calm and steady. The idea of discipleship as a religion in itself was unique contribution of the Sikh Gurus to human thought. It is the first and foremost duty of man to be ready with an unbiased, open and receptive mind to learn and imbibe from all quarters and sources, what is heat—spiritually, morally, materially. Every man is expected to have this sort of mind, which is never only an ideal. In a society of such individuals, wars, conflicts, rivalries, sufferings and sorrows will be things of past only.

A Sikh is also called a 'Khalsa'. Khalsa means a purified soul. It was the tenth Guru, Sri Guru Govind Singh who gave this interpretation to his disciples. True disciples are expected to be purified in thought, word and deed; only then can they have an open and unbiased mind. A person is initiated into Sikhism through a ceremony—"Amrit Chakhsa" (taking Nectar)—which symbolizes the moral, spiritual and physical purification of a person. Each and every man, may be born in a Sikh family, cannot be called a Sikh,

or a Khalsa unless he has taken Nectar and has purified and immortalized himself thereby.

### Path of Sikhism

The city of God and the madman city have always been considered to be entirely separate and irreconcilable. It has been generally believed that love of God and the love of world and man cannot go hand in hand (Karma Marg or the Path of Action of Gita is an exception however). But Sikhism presents a happy reconciliation of those so-called antagonistic paths.

A Sikh is both a Bhakta and a Karma Yogi. He is a man of devotion to God and at the same time is a man of action also. He is both a soldier and a saint. A man can love and serve the society more efficaciously, seriously and sincerely, if he has a firm faith and devotion to God and if he sees God in all forms and forms. One will perform more righteous and selfless actions, will serve more devotedly and will lead himself and make others lead a more pious life, if one has love and fear of God in his heart.

Fifth Guru Sri Arjan Dev has expressed this great Truth in the following words:—

*"Sorob Dharom Men Sreshth Dherem  
Her Ke Nam Jep, Nirmol Karam"*

"The best of all the religions is the religion of 'Love of God and Righteous actions.' Man must love God and base his actions on this Divine Love. That is the way to one's goal in life i.e., Self-realization. That is the highest Dharma or Divine Duty."

It is this combined path of Love and Action that can end the whole strife and struggle based on false notions of religion, creeds and races.

Man is essentially an emotional creature. His actions and behaviour are stimulated and motivated to a great extent by emotions. (Reason is also a motivating force,

but how many are there who are directed by pure reason). Emotions may be negative or positive and so is the behaviour. Bhakti Marga or the Path of Devotion and love towards God eliminates the negative Bhavas or emotions and substitutes and develops positive Bhavas which ultimately result in noble and righteous actions. This is what Sikhism has to teach and give us. It gives love of God as the basis of love and service of man. The individual is expected to be a Bhakta and a Karma Yogi—doing his actions selflessly and dedicating these to the Lord.

#### Main Principles and Teachings of Sikhism:

Main principles of Sikh religion may be enumerated as under:—

1. Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of mankind.
2. Unity of the individual soul with the Cosmic Atma.
3. Immanance of the Transcendental Reality in the Universe of Phenomena
4. Importance of leading an active but detached life.
5. Recognition of the basic unity of all creeds.
6. To find support from all that is best in all religions generally and in old Vedic and new Sufi literature particularly.

Old Upanishadic Philosophy was too tough and subtle for the layman. It was meant only for the best minds. Guru Nanek and other mystics brought to the ordinary homes from the hermitages in the high and secluded Himalayan caves, in a simplified form. Sikh Gurus were mystics who had an intense love for God, which is clearly pulsating in the following teachings of those great practical saints. These have been quoted from Guru Granth Sahib.

"He pervades the Universe and His command reigns Supreme." (Sorath).

"Truth is the remedy of all. Only truth can wash away our sins." (Asa-di-Var).

"God will not ask you of your birth. He will examine what you have done" (Prabhati).

"There are the lowest men among the low. Nanek shall go with them. What has he got to do with the great? God's eye of mercy falls on those who take care of the low ones." (Sri Rag).

"Do not touch the feet of those who call themselves Gurus and Pirs and go begging. They, who eat the fruit of their honest labour and share it with others, are the people who have found the right path" (Ver Sarang).

"No love of God without active service of man" (Japji).

"Serva bars actively if you want a place in heaven." (Sri Rag).

"Make mercy thy cotton, contentment thy thread, continence its knot, truth its twist that would make a Janus (Yajnopaviti) or the sacred thread worn by Hindus for the soul, if thou have it O Brahman! then put it on me" (Asa-di-Var).

"Make kindness the mosque, sincerity thy prayer carpet, what is just and lawful thy Koran, modesty thy circumcision, civility thy fasting, so shall thou be a Mussalman."

"If clothes become stained by blood stains on them, how can the hearts of those who drink human blood, be pure?" (Asa-di-Var)

"How can you call the woman inferior, when it is she who gives birth to great men?" (Asa-di-Var).

"O Farid, this world is beautiful. It has a thorny garden in it, it is true. But a man comes to no harm if he keeps the path, laid for him by the Guide."

"Why tear thy coat, Nanek, why wear a blanket? Thou can find the Lord even seated in thy house—it thine intention ha good."

"Why dost thou go to the forest in

search of God? He lives in all, is yet ever distinct. He abides with thee too. As fragrance dwells in a flower or reflection in a mirror, so does God dwell in all everything."

"Thou art Omnipresent, Thou art the refuge of all life.....Thou art my Father, Mother, Kith and Kin.....Thou art my Protector—with Thy Grace I can know Thee., May Thy sword (symbol of Divine Energy) help us.....May the Kingdom of Justice come and all be united in love.....Give me power so that from righteous deeds I may never refrain.....May all prosper by Thy Grace... Sat Sri Akal...Truth is immortal..." (Extract from Ardesa or Sikh prayer).

Tbns we find, in the above selected teachings of Sikhism that these are universal in their nature synthesizing what is good in all religions. There is a controversy as to the source of Sikhism and also to the question what religion did Nanak himself profess. There is no wonder that

at the death of Nanak, Hindus wanted to burn his mortal physical body and Muslims demanded to hurry it according to their respective rites. Even now, different persons assert different claims over Nanak and his religion. But they are blinded by the very curtain that Nanak tried to raise up. They fail to understand the spirit and essence of Nanak's teachings. They are unable to visualize the role of Nanak in the evolution of religion and his effort to take religion to its final goal, i.e., to the status and position of a Universal Religion.

Let us wait and pray for the day when man begins to understand Religion, comprehend the Truth and feel the Reality.

Let us venture and make effort to accelerate the evolutionary process of religion by imbuing the true spirit of Nanak's teachings.

Let us pray for the Divine Grace to be showered upon us through Gurus like Nanak and Sivansanda.

## The Sikh Approach to the Ultimate Goal of Life

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[ Dehra Dun ]

The real teachings of the Sikh religion are essentially the same as the fundamental tenets of other religions. Take the example of a waterfall. How lovely it looks! It can teach us all what we want to know about God and Creation. Reflect on it for a while. A waterfall consists of a sheet of water coming from somewhere in the hill and then it falls down breaking up into an infinite number of bubbles and waves. These exist in form for a short while, and then again get re-absorbed in the running sheet of water further ahead.

Similarly, the formless God assumes infinite forms constituting the whole of the creation and reaches His manifestations

with Himself ultimately. All is God. What we, in Maya, see in infinite forms of God to whom we give our own imagination-conceived names, which in reality, are like infinite waves. Each Jiva is like a bubble. A bubble has a base of some water which is supporting it and from where it was formed and in which it will finally be absorbed. This portion of water can be compared to an individual entity.

The main teachings of all religions could be classified under five sections, i.e., about God, about creation, about prophets, about soul, and about action and its resultant fruits. I shall now describe the Sikh approach to these five divisions.

God is one. He is infinite, all-pervaded, inc., omniscient, omnipotent, the creator of the universe and also its preserver and destroyer. God's creation is numberless which is ever-changing and finite. Prophets are the messengers of God; they are one with God, and they are born with a definite mission to uphold Dharma and bring about peace, amity and spiritual beatitude. Every individual soul is a fragment of the Supreme Soul shrouded by Maya, and its ultimate goal is its diffusion in its origin. There is the Divine dispensation of justice according to our actions on this earth-plane. The law of transmigration is infallible. The fate of the individual soul is the result of his actions. Thus some are destined to realize God and some have yet to pass through many more immigrations. The ideal of human life is to eschew individual egoistic tendencies, vanity and vice, and surrender oneself to God, serve Him in every way and abide by His Will which is known through pure conscience.

Sikhism enjoins the practice of divine life which constitutes in the cultivation of pure thoughts and performance of pure deeds. The good and evil should be judged through the means of unbiased discrimination, and the right path should be adhered to at all events. Prayer has a significant role in the life of the individual which provides him a link to attune himself with

the infinite. Meditation on the Supreme Truth, singing of the Divine Name, practice of virtues, service of the preceptor and humanity at large, are the different fundamentals of the Sikh doctrine.

To respect all prophets and the followers of other religions, to avoid greed, anger, lust and pride in all its forms, to stick in the path of honesty, brotherhood, and purity, and to see God in all and everywhere, are some of the main ideals in Sikhism.

The Sikh religion is based on universal brotherhood, mutual understanding, and adoption of divine life. We are apt to confuse the real religion with our social customs and ritualistic observances and modes of prayer. Real religion is the same everywhere, though social ethics differ according to regional and traditional influences. No one is particularly high or low in the eyes of the one God. An atheist is as much our brother and a child of God as a theist. No reason or rhyme should ever impel one to spurn another. To a true follower of religion, who is inwardly pure, and outwardly likable and unostentatious, all creations of God are equal. Let us not be just merely passive theists but practical and active theists, and let us try to do whatever we can with wholehearted energy and modesty to disseminate the gospel of true religion.

### Ode to the Eternal Spirit

(*Guru Govind Singh in 'Japji'*)

O Thou that hath no mark, sign, caste, or creed,  
No clan, tribe, form, or colour, or outline,  
No special shape or dress, Thou  
Movelessness,  
Self-luminous eternally,  
Measureless,athomless, all potency,  
Lord of the three world—  
Waking, dreamsing, sleep.

Angeis, men, titans, forests, grasses, all,  
Only 'not this,' 'not this,' of Thee declare,  
Who may recite Thy names and works in full,  
Since every name and every works is Thine?  
One art Thou, countless yet Thy multitudes;  
All forms are Thine through which Thou  
makest play;  
All merge back into Thee at the End of Day.  
(Translated by Dr. Bhagwan Das)

## Universal Anthem

*Thars : Sunaja*

Glory to Thee, O fair Mother Earth, common parent of all.  
 The common sacred place of birth of all humanity.  
 All are thy children, white, brown or black, yellow, short or tall.  
 Bless one and all to know and feel this true unity.  
 The continents are they cradles and every race a child,  
 Clothed with the blue sky and the oceans calm and mild.  
 Thy winds, water and soil are the same everywhere,  
 Nourishing every being common for all to share.  
 Though conduct, action and behaviour appear as diverse,  
 One alone is the Power that works in the universe.  
 Thought words and languages differ in Peking or in Rome,  
 One alone is the Primal Sound, the Root Vibration Om.  
 Though upon the external surface, man as many appears,  
 In the Self he is one, thus declare sages and seers.  
 All that is God alone, there is no diversity,  
 The only Truth of this life is the essential unity.  
 In unity we live and by disunion we fall.  
 The one Almighty God is the Father of all.  
 This gracious earth is the Mother of all.  
 Each human being is the Brother of all.  
 As one Sun illuminates the entire earth outside,  
 The one Spirit Universal in man doth reside,  
 Brightening and lightening the chambers of his heart,  
 Inspiring and indwelling each religion, science and art.  
 God is One, the Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, the same for all mankind,  
 Truth Supreme, the One Reality, Spirit Transcendental,  
 A golden Cord Spiritual the whole world to bind,  
 In bonds of Love and Brotherhood and Unity Eteral.

## Universal Kirtan

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Bhajo Lord Jesus Bhajo Lord Mohammed   | Bhajo Maocor Bhajo Shams Tabrie            |
| Bhajo Khuda Khuda Bhajo Allah Alleh       | 6. Bhajo Wahl Guru Bhajo Nansk Dav         |
| 2. Bhajo Lord Buddha Bhajo Tathagata      | Bhajo Guru Arjon Bhajo Guru Govio          |
| Bhajo Arhat Bhajo Bodhisattwa             | 7. Bhajo Saint Joseph Bhajo Saint Patrik   |
| 3. Bhajo Lord Coniocios Bhajo Lord Shiote | Bhajo Saint Matthew Bhajo Saint Francis    |
| Bhajo Lord Lao-Tzu Bhajo Lord Mao-Tzu     | 8. Bhajo Vyasa Maharshi Bhajo Vydyarany    |
| 4. Bhajo Lord Rama Bhajo Lord Krishna     | Bhajo Sackracharyas Bhajo Ramanojacharya   |
| Bhajo Lord Mahavir Bhajo Tirthakshras     | 9. Bhajo Madhwacharya Bhajo Vallabhacharya |
| 5. Bhajo Lord Zoroaster Bhajo Ahnr Mazda  | Bhajo Nimbarkacharya Bhajo Kahir D         |

**Chapter Sixteen**

**GENERAL CONTRIBUTIONS ON RELIGION  
AND OTHER ALLIED SUBJECTS**

# Religion Is One—Practised Variously

Sri Swami Sivananda

God is one, diverse are His creations. Truth is one various are its expressions. The colour of light is white, but is composed of seven main colours. Religion is one but many are its forms of practice.

In theory there can be only one religion, as there is only one God. There cannot however be a time when there will be only one religion to practice.

## How Religion is One

Religion is one in the sense that the sense that the quest for the Ultimate is common in all faiths. Modes of approach and secondary details are bound to vary, but the final goal is the same in each case.

Religion is one in the sense that its emphasis is on what is positive and its opposition to what is negative are unanimous, but the means for the abstention from or the transmutation of the negative are bound to be diverse.

## Why?

Variety is the law of nature. No two individuals are cut in the same image. Temperamental moulds, emotional attributes and psychological make-ups differ from person to person. Therefore, it is rather difficult to find two persons having exactly the same conception of God.

In practice, thus, there will always be different religions, or rather conceptions or modes of religion, to suit different moulds of mind, racial characteristics, traditional backgrounds, historical influences and geographical conditions.

## Urge for Progress

Evolution is the law of nature. In every individual, there is always a persistent urge to progress towards the better and to get over imperfections and limitations. There is always an eternal quest for uninterrupted well-being, happiness and fulfilment, and there is also the perpetual dread of pain and death. It is

this urge for evolution and happiness, and the fear of pain and death that gave birth to religion in the early dawns of civilization.

There was also the factor of the unknown power so evident in this phenomenal world and in every life, and yet so perpetually mysterious and elusive, that formed the pivot of all religious quest. The urge to know and to penetrate the realms of the unknown and beyond death was the second important factor in the history of religion.

Theo, finally, there was the very essential and decisive influence that was attempted to be exerted by religion upon social life for mutual welfare, amicable relationship with one another, for peace, concord and harmony in society, and also for collective prosperity.

## Diversity in Religious Practices

Thus in different regions and at different times, many forms of religion sprang up, their fundamental ideals being almost identical and yet their ritualistic practices widely divergent. This diversity in religious practices was mainly due to the cultural background of the races and their historical traditions and customs and manners of life.

Today, there are eleven surviving major religions with multifarious sub divisions and affiliated beliefs. These sub divisions are the obvious corollary of the changes of time. No religion could afford to be static as each had to be adopted to the shifting needs of the day. So the subdivisions were unavoidable, and they will continue to be through ages to come. These sub divisions would have become separate religions by themselves, for the inevitable, unifying force of traditional and cultural integrity that bound them to their mother religions, as well as due to

the absence of sufficiently dynamic and great personalities attached to them

### Buddhism and Sikhism

Buddhism was rather a sub-division of Hinduism, but in the long run it found itself incapable of maintaining a separate, overwhelming existence in the native land of Hinduism, though today it is a dominant religion outside India, where the indigenous cultural backgrounds were different.

Sikhism, too, was rather an offshoot of Hinduism, which was born of historical necessity at a time when the militant Islam came to India as an ideological spearhead of Muslim invasions. Till today, it continues to maintain a separate existence due to historical reasons. Hinduism lacks a militant drive at the face of militant opposition, and is overwhelmed by too many ritualistic intricacies and caste-distinctions, and so long as these factors remain, Sikhism will continue to exist in this country.

### Expansion of Major Religions

Now, why there are only eleven main religions? Why not many more? Indeed, there would have been many more if religions today had the founders and the protagonists of the various philosophical schools and religious ideologies possessed the same amount of proselytizing drive and vigour like that of the founders and the vanguards of the major existing religions.

A Socratic religion would have been flourishing now had his followers succeeded in converting an Emperor like Ashoka, or possessed the dynamic proselytizing impetus of the Apostles.

Buddhism became one of the dominant religions of the world mainly because it had the initial backing of Ashoka strengthened by the marvellous genius of his missionaries and the later itinerant monks who were able to convert many of the

rulers of East Asia through the Buddha's gospel of peace and love.

Christianity, too, expanded itself mainly through the conversion of the aristocracies of Asia Minor during its early existence, and when the rulers of Europe were subsequently converted, it was but a foregone conclusion that the masses too, were bound to imitate their sovereigns' example who held the sway of life and death over their subjects in those days.

The success of the expansion of Islam was chiefly through the power of sword. Indeed, quite a few Muslim invaders found the reason for their adventures into foreign territories in their self-imposed righteousness of leading the holy war of Islam against the "non-believers".

### Hinduism

Hinduism had altogether a different history. It had no single founder, rather it is not a single religion, but a combination of several religions, bound by an integral bond of unity. Many Rishis and seers have contributed to its growth. It never led any aggressive war for proselytizing other people in its creed. It has the finest and the loftiest philosophy that human mind could conceive of and yet it is replete with most bafflingly rigid sectarian and anachronical practices that are rather a blot to its pristine purity. But it should not be overlooked that the latter are, to a great extent a corollary of India's historical upheavals. It is these rigid formalities and compartmentalism that have made Hinduism withstand the frequent shocks of alien invasions. If they were not there the people of India would have been an-hock converted into Islam as in Persia, Egypt, Afghanistan and other middle eastern and south-east Asian countries.

### Essentials and Non-Essentials

Every religion has the finest spiritual ideals and the noblest of moral principles

for the evolution of the human personality, and yet every religion has many formalities and practices that are unquestionably anachronical. Every religion has the loftiest principles of justice, and yet in the name of each and in many cases with the sanction of religious Scriptures, many things are perpetrated which are contrary to justice and also to the fundamental tenets professed by each.

Taken as a whole, in every group of Scriptures, belonging to different religions, there are bound to be contradictions in spite of the arduous effort for their reinterpretation and reconciliation by their votaries. What is more important to be taken into consideration is that no religion can afford to remain static, and no single individual has written all the Scriptures of a single religion. Opinions vary from person to person, temperaments differ, and social conditions, mental outlook and evaluations change from time to time.

The correct course is to accept the best, and not to bother about the rest. What is found to be unsuitable is better to avoid and ignore rather than enter into polemics about their being right or wrong. What is suitable for one may not be suitable for another, and what is suitable today may become completely outmoded after a century. It is enough if one sincerely practises even a dozen of the cardinal precepts of one's religion.

The fundamentals never change and are universally applicable to all in various degrees.

#### Individuality of Approach

Though one might be a follower of a particular religion, it is generally found, no intelligent person can entirely reconcile himself with everything that is said in his religion. Thus every person though owing allegiance to his hereditary religion has his own conception about that religion, at least so far as he himself is concerned.

We find, therefore, though mankind owes its allegiance to no more than a dozen

religions or so, every intelligent individual follows his own religion, or rather what he seems to understand about the religion to which he belongs.

Times have greatly changed since the last of the major religions (Sikhism 15th century A.C.) was founded. Indeed, it would be very difficult today to establish a new religion. No important religion has been founded during the last five hundred years. There have only been further interpretations of the existing mother religions and further explorations in the field of philosophy.

#### Times Have Changed

Secularism predominates the outlook of most of the advanced nations. No longer can one find the support of an emperor to convert large masses of his subjects. This is an age of political ideologies. The more immediate needs are economic and social. The problem of religion is apparently secondary in the lives of the people, rather religion hardly presents a problem.

People have become more individualistic in their outlook. Even thirty-five years of communist rule in the USSR has succeeded in converting only three percent of its population to the creed of its government. It is most improbable that any future government or any of the existing ones would try to champion a new religion. Mass conversion to a new religion will be very remote for centuries to come. There can only be more of Shankaras, Ramanujas, Martin Luthers, Kants and Hegels and so on, to effect modification of and to reinterpret the existing religions and also to found new schools of philosophical outlook. There will, of course, be more of sub-divisions but it is improbable that they will independently exist outside the ambit of the mother religions.

#### Eternal Quest for Perfection

As already said the increasingly individualistic tendency in the people and the progressive trend of the human thought would induce intelligent individuals to evolve their own conceptions of religion,

each according to one's liking, though they would externally owe their nominal allegiance to their respective, hereditary religions.

The basic tenets of religion will ever remain same. The quest for the perfection of the human personality and the urge to transcend all kinds of limitations, imperfections, shortcomings and weaknesses, the unceasing search for the Unknown, the

perpetual struggle to know that which is infinite and absolute—all these will ever continue to be the common objective of religion, though the ways and means for the attainment of this one, universal goal will be as numerous as the population of the earth.

Religion, therefore, will continue to be one, though practised variously \*

## Spiritual Discipline and Social Organization

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Culture, in the proper sense of the term has a spiritual element. This may be supplied by religion, and very often this is the case. But it may also be derived from other sources. Imagination, poetry, comprehensive vision and deep meditation are some of these. Always culture lifts up the human mind above utilitarian considerations and the plane of the gross and concrete. It leads it from the phenomenal and ephemeral to the abiding and eternal. Even in the domain of science the progress is from observation to generalization in which imagination plays such an important part. Mechanics and technicians are incapable of this play of imagination and of the abstract speculation which make hypotheses possible.

In the sphere of the Humanities, poetry affords the greatest scope for freedom from the bondage of the concrete of dogma and formula of stereotyped opinion and orthodox view, because it is mainly based on imagination. Poetry is therefore, believed to be a great emancipating force and a means of the spiritual uplift for the human soul. As Matthew Arnold remarks, poetry is coming more and more to occupy the place which religion once held, in proportion as this is being encrusted with formality and ritualism and its spiritual

sublimity, i.e., the imaginative element in it is disappearing.

### Emergence of 'Spirituality'

In the history of ancient India the emergence of spirituality is clear. The ritualism of the *Samhitas* and the *Brahmanas*,—the worship of the material and concrete,—gives place, in course of time to the pursuit of the intellectual ideal in the *Upanishads*, as expounded in the *Vedanta*. There is also the infusion of imagination in *Upanishadic* mysticism. Finally the *Gita* arrives at a synthesis of Karma, Jnana and Bhakti in its sublime and comprehensive spiritual message to mankind.

Freedom from the bondage of the petty and concrete, from the obsession of rigid theory and creed, from restricted outlook and sympathy, from narrowness of imagination as implied by culture. It emphasizes catholicity of mind, love of fresh ideas and faith in the infinite possibilities of the operation of the spirit with a readiness to work for the promotion of the highest ideal uninfluenced by any other ulterior consideration. This is the meaning of the well known passages of the *Gita*.

### Organizations for Promotion of Culture

Undoubtedly, the realization of this ideal is difficult, and requires strenuous efforts. These can really be fruitful if

\* Please also see Chapter Three, pp. 73 to 106, for identical topics.

based on some system of discipline which perhaps cannot be evolved by any individual however talented he may be. It must be the outcome of social consciousness that finds expression in organizations or associations which seek to promote the good of humanity through the invocation of the spiritual.

These were very prominent in ancient and medieval times. The Academy in ancient Athens, the Christian church in medieval Europe, the Ashram in ancient India, the Vihara in Buddhist times, the Math of the Post-Buddhistic age, furnished the training ground for the best specimens of humanity, the humanized and spiritual beings with a soul catholic, sensitivity and finely balanced and attuned to the rhythm of the Infinite. There were, in all these, splendid systems of intellectual and spiritual discipline and rules of conduct in which were institutionalized the cultural ideals of the epochs.

#### Social Stratification

But it is true that the golden images had feet of clay.

The organizations for promotion of spiritual culture were based on social stratification which meant, for many, moral and intellectual degradation.

Slavery and untouchability in the lower rungs were generally found in the past in all such countries that have made remarkable contributions to knowledge and spiritual culture. But too much must not be made of this. Slavery generally was the legacy of war, and untouchability was the consequence of a sense of racial and cultural superiority. No individual law-givers or thinkers were ever responsible for their introduction anywhere. They were the products of the spirit of barbarism, of the "axe and tiger" which at one time held the mob mind in grip all over the world and does so on occasions even now. Evolution of spiritual-

uality has meant the gradual softening of these instincts, the dawning of light on darkness. The evils in their worst forms did not continue very long everywhere.

Slavery came, in course of time, to have its redeeming features, and relief was afforded to the untouchables, in some way or other. Bonds of obligation and affection slowly grew up between the lower and the higher classes. The deities worshipped by the former were given a place in the pantheon of the latter, and their manners and customs too were partly adopted by those who had nothing but contempt for them. Slaves were emancipated and were accorded a higher and responsible status in society.

#### Process of Levelling Up

The levelling that has been going on for some time past, has as its ultimate goal, what is sometimes called a classless society where privileges of birth and position will be unknown. This is still in the womb of the future, and at present, in consequence of reorientation and reorganization we have a society where the classes are less sharply differentiated. Levelling up rather than levelling down has taken place on an extensive scale. Hence the standard of life of large masses of people has improved, and a desire for greater comforts has become evident. Political power and responsibility which were confined to a few are now claimed by many who demand education as the stepping-stone to it. What these can possibly assimilate is not spiritual culture of the highest kind which is beyond the reach of all but a few, but utilitarian education or training which will help them to live a decent life and to shoulder the responsibilities of citizenship.

Thinkers, legislators and educationists are now busy devising means of spread of such utilitarian education and raising earning capacity of the people. The ob-

jective set before itself by a modern democracy is thus education for citizenship, education with a purpose with an ulterior objective—not really inner discipline leading to spiritual culture or human perfection.

#### Role of Ashramas

What then is to become of the ideal of spiritual culture which, in India at any rate, was and is still regarded as the most cherished and treasured heritage? Who are to hold aloft its banner and work as its champions and promoters? Not certainly the universities established by the state. These are wedded to the schemes of utilitarian studies—professional and technological training, training for citizenship, for the trades and the public services. They look upon men, if not like Nepoleans as food for cannon, as applicants for situations in government departments and in commercial concerns. The conception of spiritual culture or of all-round human perfection unconnected with qualification for service or profession—or profundeness as distinct from smartness, of intellectual elevation as distinct from cleverness, of ability as distinct from adroitness and sycophancy, does not appeal to them, or is 'beyond their comprehension. Success is their God and not Self-realization,—self-assertion, not self-abnegation for the glorification of the 'not-self'. There is even a danger that their influence may dim the glory of the past and may affect the atmosphere in institutions which are yet inspired by different aspirations and ideologies. Santiniketan has become a modern University and the beautiful *Amlak* groves where the poet had dreamt golden dreams and sought to live a dedicated life, will now be disturbed by the shouts of educationist politicians and the clamour of candidates for University distinctions who have no faculty of reverence and who start with the idea of learning nothing and of using diplomas as mere stepping-stones. One

wonders what will become of great centres of spiritual culture, the relics of vanished glory—of *Maths* and *Ashrams* of ancient India.

Even if they continue and are not swept away by the new gusts will they be able to function properly? Is it likely that they will only be isolated centres of antiquated ideals, out of touch with the modern era?

Free India cannot be satisfied if they are. It is certainly to be expected that they will serve as the link between the past and the present, between the highest and the lowest in the land, and that the ancient teachings and ideals of India should infiltrate into the country through them, and bring about a spiritual renaissance among the masses.

#### Spiritual Aspirations

The state is the embodiment of a spiritual ideal—it reflects not only the might, the skill and the organizing genius of a people, but also its inner realization of the spiritual ideal. Just as provision has to be made by a Government for the development of a nation's material and intellectual resources and its military strength, facilities should also be offered for the fulfilment of its dreams and inner cravings—the last of which are its spiritual aspirations. These can be realized only if the treasure acquired by the greatest of men is shared in by the vast majority. Their participation will also add to it, but if they are kept aloof and deprived it may ultimately shrink and disappear. It is, therefore, worthy of serious consideration how people in trades and professions—in mills and factories—may come in touch with the custodians and promoters of spiritual culture, how spiritual discipline may be instilled into them and how their grosser nature may be made finer. Social organizations and educational systems should be such as to uplift the whole nation to a higher plane, not merely to provide for defence or material and intel-

leciual progress, i.e., to make it more catholic more imaginative, finer in moral texture and outlook and in closer communion with the Infinite and the Eternal

## The World As a Sport of 'Chit'-Consciousness

The Late Dr. Hars Prasad Shastri  
(Founder, Shanti Sadan, London)

The Vedanta as taught in the Upanishads and the Gita Sashtra is not an intellectual gymnastic or an exercise of solitary meditation, divorced from the affairs of the world.

Sri Vasishtha has said that the world is a sport of 'Chit'-consciousness. There cannot be a more beautiful and philosophical description of this creation of Maya called Samsara.

We have to keep our intellect unified in identification-mediation on the substratum of the universe, Sat-chit-ananda, existence-knowledge-bliss' absolute, but one of our chief duties is, as our holy ancestor Sri Vyasa has said, to serve mankind.

It is the spiritual service which is the crying need of the hour. There are many philanthropists, scientists, political reformers, but few who understand the world as the sport of the Lord and want to serve mankind by contributing to their upliftment from the bonds of Tamas and Rajas, to the eternal peace and illumination of identity of Jiva and Brahman.

The West is bubbling with physical and intellectual energy. The spirit of adventure here is remarkable. The heart of the West is not so materialistic as people think it to be. Unless the ampine energy of the West is devoted to creative spiritual channels, it will find expression in international wars and feuds, devotion to physical comfort and pleasure, and adherence to some kind of materialistic creed like Marxian communism.

Seers and saviors, descendants of holy Rishis, I appeal to you to carry Vedanta all over the world and convince the people,

intellectually as well as on the practical plane that human life has only one great object and it is realization of God as the substratum of the world and the Indweller of all.

Vedanta is opposed to any kind of narrowness. If it is associated with any kind of national bigotry or racial superiority-complex, then it defeats its own purpose. Humanism is good, but it is a product of the renaissance and smacks of hidden materialism as we find in the teachings of Auguste Comte and his followers.

The Western philosophers from Descartes to Bertrand Russel have found no satisfactory solution to life. The poetry of Goethe to Robert Bridges gives only glimpses of the universal truth of *sartam khalvidam brahma*,—all this is God.

Fundamentally, the East and the West are not different from each other. Humanity is like a herd which must fly towards the blue of Devotion-Knowledge. The East and the West are like the two wings of a bird which must co-operate with each other on the spiritual as well as the intellectual and the aesthetic plane.

Holy ones I appeal to you in all humanity in my capacity as a student of Sri Sankara and a follower of the holy Sanatana Dharma to found an authoritative organization to spiritualize the whole mental and social structure of India, to root out the evils of materialism and every kind of narrowness, and also to give your serious attention to imparting the holy truth of the Gita to the West in a non-dogmatic and universal manner. This is the supreme task before me.

Pandits and Yogins of the holy Bharata-varsha.

Let us serve the Lord and delete our personal ego. It is better to die while serving this cause than to live in an imagined national glory or with an inflated pride in materialism. God in man invites our worship, and not destructive criticism.

My salutations to the One without a second who revealed Himself in the purified hearts of Vyasa and Sankara and in the beautiful and treacherous valleys of the holy Himalayas.

N.B. The above paper was sent by Dr.

Hari Prasad Shastri on the occasion of the World Parliament of Religions held at Sivanandanagar, Rishikesh, during the first week of April, 1953. Dr. Shastri, who founded the Shanti Sadan at London more than two decades ago, passed away in the beginning of this year, leaving behind him his priceless legacy of a number of scholarly and inspiring works on India's ancient spiritual lore including the English translations of "Panchasati," "Vnlmila Ramayana," and a few other old Sanskrit texts. Dr. Shastri was a lecturer in Indic and Oriental studies at the Universities of Shanghai and Tokyo before he went to London.

## Science and Philosophy of Religion

Dr. A.C. Das, M.A., Ph.D.  
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In this article I propose to discuss the relation, if any, between science and philosophy of religion; and before I can determine the relation between these important branches of human knowledge, I have to ascertain the sense in which the term "science" is to be taken. In India, the distinction between science and philosophy is quite clear and is as old as the Upanishads. In Indian terminology all empirical studies including science are called *aparam tvidya*, whereas philosophy is called *para tvidya*, dealing as it does with the ultimate nature of existence. Philosophy is conceived of as *tvidyavibha* as well, meaning that philosophy is the fountainhead of the knowledge of the ultimate principle or principles. However, it is nowadays a commonplace belief that at the beginning of Western thought there was hardly any clear distinction between one branch of knowledge and another. In ancient Greece, the cradle of Western civilization, particularly at the start of Greek thought, there was no distinction whatsoever between science and philo-

sophy as we understand them to be today. It was indeed later that the mass of knowledge attained was differentiated into various branches of human study or pursuit. Science and Philosophy

The word "philosophy" originally meant love or wisdom or truth, and as science in its origin was a search of the truth of things, there was naturally nothing to set science as a study against philosophy. We can say that in Greece, both philosophy and science originated and developed under the innate or initial urge of the human mind towards knowledge. So we find that Thales, the father of Western philosophy, and some other early Greek philosophers combined in them the scientist and the philosopher. Indeed, Plato and Aristotle, in the fifth and fourth century B.C., sought to clarify the distinction between science and philosophy. But they differed from each other in their conceptions. Plato formed in his own way his peculiar conception of science. According to him, science is knowledge of the realities, the ideas, and is in fact identical with

what is traditionally called metaphysics,<sup>1</sup> whereas the knowledge of the objects of Nature—the phenomena is opinion. What we today call science he calls the higher form of opinion Aristotle, on the other hand, takes science as an empirical study of universal and necessary connections.<sup>2</sup> According to him, science starts with perception and proceeds to systematize the facts of experience, and he gives us quite a hierarchy of sciences including the science of logic and mathematics, showing thereby that science brings order to our ordinary knowledge and is therefore an ordered knowledge of things. Philosophy with Aristotle, however, is metaphysics i.e., investigation of the first principles. These Aristotelian definitions of science and philosophy came to stay and commended themselves to the cultured circles for a long time.

#### Metaphysic of Religion

But despite the clarification the words "science" and "philosophy" or rather "metaphysics" received at the hands of Aristotle, they were since now and then much confused, and the confusion between the two words marked some writings even in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Bacon, for example in one of his essays says that "a little philosophy inclines a man towards atheism." As we find, Bacon employs the term "philosophy" to the sense of natural science. By the term as he uses it all that he means is that a little scientific knowledge that is to say, a little physics, a little chemistry, a little astronomy, and so forth, tends to upset one's mind. Some again wrote treatises on physical science under the title "natural philosophy".

Anyway, with the progress of science, especially in the nineteenth century, science as the study of phenomena came to be clearly distinguished from philosophy or from metaphysics as investigation of noumens. In the recent past there has, of course, been much new development in the field of philosophy and in some quarters a new conception of philosophy itself is in vogue, namely, the conception of philosophy as analysis, particularly the logical positivists' conception of philosophy as analysis of scientific propositions. Here I cannot enter upon any discussion of this conception. Suffice it to say that the conception of philosophy as analysis of experience may have a bearing upon the speculative study of religion. For this paper I take the term "philosophy" to mean metaphysics, and here if I speak of philosophy of religion I speak of it as a metaphysic of religion, in the sense that it studies the ultimate nature and basis of religion.

#### Metaphysical Data

There may nevertheless be a science to study religion and we have already the science of religion as psychology of religion or as comparative religion which is the science and the history of religion. But the science of religion is an empirical study which does not or cannot penetrate beyond empirical data. The science of religion as a science is none the less on the same footing with the special social sciences—economics, politics, etc., even with the science of society. But the term "science" in this use only means ordered knowledge. Theo every systematic study including philosophy and even philosophy

<sup>1</sup> Republic, tr by Lindsay, 1923, J M Dent & Sons, London, p. 234

<sup>2</sup> Analytica Posteriora, Book I, Chap 32 (Ross's edition)

<sup>3</sup> Cf G F Roogar, Current Equivocation in Regard to Science, Hibbert Journal, Vol XLIV, p 340.

of religion is a science. In that case the relation between science and philosophy is oversimplified. The fact, however, remains that while science in its narrow sense is empirical in outlook as well as procedure, in the sense that it derives its principles of explanation from the experience of facts, philosophy is speculative in the sense that it proceeds by way of analysis and reflective interpretation with the help of principles, concepts and categories that are derived from pure thinking, i.e., the thinking of the universal or the most abstract aspects of things. Now if the distinction we make between science and philosophy is valid, it seems that science is dead opposed to the philosophy of religion.

#### Conflict Between Science and Religion

The opposition we thus posit between science and philosophy of religion is reinforced by the fact that science as such, or better, physical science, is opposed to religion. History supports this view. At the advent of science, especially at its advanced stage in the nineteenth century, science came into conflict with Christianity. The scientists of the time were quite ignorant of religion or religious facts, whereas the clergymen were equally ignorant of science. So the so-called opposition between physical science and the Christian faith was just opposition between some scientists, on the one hand, and some Christian theologians, on the other. The scientists set Christianity at naught, only because some dogmas of Christianity, particularly the doctrine of Creation, came to be contradicted by the theory of evolution which held the world upside down for some time. But this is not all. There was also a severe attack upon religion as a phenomenon. Comte, for example, sought to explain it away as a figment of imagination, and

many others followed suit. There are by now many theories of religion. According to some, religion is a projection of fear. According to some others, religion is nothing but sex, and so forth. Nowadays it has become something of a fashion with most scientists to repudiate religion. As the saying goes, good cometh out of evil. The scientists by their opposition to religion unwittingly inspired revision and reformation of the doctrines of Christianity and also provoked a deep study of religion as such and of the religions.

#### Development of Christian Theology

We now discern a peculiar relation between science and philosophy of religion, namely, that philosophy of religion in modern times could not develop in the significant way it has developed except for science. I can make the point clearer by reference to the origin and development of Christian theology. As we know, Christianity as a religion was born and thrived in the Roman Empire. But in the beginning, this new religion was at a tremendous disadvantage, not for lack of organization or leadership within the religion, but because of constant opposition from the Imperial Authorities. In the early centuries of the Christian era the socio-religious condition in the Empire was rather peculiar. Judaism, an older religion, was indeed there along with the new religion. Besides, many cults from all sides found their way into the Roman countries. There was again the cult of Emperor-worship. People made of the Emperor a veritable god. They erected temples to him and offered regular worship to the statues (of him) installed in the temples; and it seems that the Roman Emperors enforced the cult as an instrument of Imperial policy. But of all people the Christians could not persuade themselves

to accept the Emperor as a god and burn incense before him. The Christians were therefore suspect in the Empire and the more so because they practised their faith in secret associations.

By the middle of the second century A.C., there were doubtless small islands of Christianity all over the Empire. Now persecution of the Christians formed part of the policy of the Emperors. They more often than not demanded from the Church explanation of the articles of faith; and the leaders of the Church had to think out the whole content of their religion and write lengthy apologetics in answer to the charges from the Emperors. It is undoubtedly true that in the Church itself there arose a need for the clarification of the content of Christianity. But we cannot deny that speculation on Christianity as a new faith was stirred or stimulated more by the malignant Imperial opposition to the Church creeds than by anything else.

#### Interdependence of Science and Religion

Thus we see that what happened to Christianity as a religion in the past in Europe, has happened or is happening now to religion as a phenomenon the world over. It seems that scientists have made common cause with communists and other anti-religious people in attacking religion. While scientists seek to explain away religion as a projection of the human mind, communists affiliate religion to class-struggle which is, according to them, the main principle of social dynamics, and describes religion as the opium of the people—as a deliberate device for the ruling class to exploit the ordinary people.

At all events from the opposition between science and philosophy one may conclude that philosophy of religion is independent of science. But this view is not completely true. At the present stage of culture no human study can be

wholly indifferent to any other. In short the different studies developed so far, more or less influence one another. The theory of evolution, for instance, was propounded by way of explaining some biological phenomena. But the evolutionary point of view has now entered into all the crannies of our culture, such as sociology, politics, geology, economics and even into psychology and philosophy. There is really one common atmosphere in which all these studies are developing. Philosophy of religion therefore cannot quite keep clear of the sciences, some of them at least.

#### Subjective and Objective Aspects

Religion as it is, is a social phenomenon. When we say this, all that we mean is that religion is a phenomenon which is scarcely to be found outside society, savagery or civilization. Again religion has two sides, inner and outer, subjective and objective. The subjective side of religion consists of some relevant ideas, beliefs and feelings. Religion as an objective phenomenon, on the other hand, consists of some practices, rites and rituals. There is, however, no division between the subjective and the objective side of religion. The subjective and the objective side form just one unity, the objective side being an articulate expression of the subjective. There is no denying that the outward religious observances are not intelligible in the least without a reference to some inner facts. The religious practices are like the husk and the relevant inner fact or facts are like the kernel of a seed. Indeed the outward fact of religion embodies the idea of religion. In religious consciousness there is an inner symbolism which finds expression in some outer acts. In a way the inner, i.e., the subjective side is more important. Inasmuch as historically it is the inner aspect of religion that determines the outer.

### Medium of Psychology

Psychology avowedly deals with mind in its manifold aspects. So analysis of religious consciousness falls within the scope of psychology, and psychology of religion is already a branch of the science of psychology. Discussion apart, at this stage we may say without fear of contradiction that religion is a human phenomenon and that religion as such takes its rise from human nature. In short, Ideas, feeling and volition mark religious consciousness. Ideas or beliefs about the deity, creation and all that are embodied in religious dogmas and doctrines and the corresponding feelings are expressed in religious practices or worship. It is extremely interesting how religious ideas and beliefs originate and, for that reason, how dogmas and doctrines are formulated in articulate language. In the study of religion in its content, philosophy of religion has doubtless to take advantage of psychological analysis. Psychology is therefore a presupposition of philosophy of religion. The philosopher who investigates religion must be a trained psychologist.

Some, however, make overmuch of psychology. They maintain that the philosophy of religion as a study is nothing more than a branch of the science of psychology. It is contended that philosophy of religion is to investigate only how religious consciousness and the different elements within it develop and that religious consciousness being an aspect of mind lies within the province of psychology. This is an extreme view and is based upon a confusion between the viewpoint of psychology and that of philosophy, even though they deal with much the same phenomena.

We have indicated above that psychology is an aid to philosophy of religion.

We must have to clearly grasp this point. Psychology is after all a positive science; it only describes but does not account for the things it investigates. As we say, psychology studies mind or consciousness in its structure and forms and also in its development. Psychology, nevertheless, does not or cannot explain the origin of mind or consciousness. Psychology of religion obviously starts with its subject-matter, the phenomenon of religion. It may, however, be retorted that psychology does not merely describe but also explains the phenomena with which it is concerned.

It is true that some schools of psychology seek to account for the psyche or consciousness. But as is well-known they do not really explain; they only explain away the principle of consciousness. Much in the same way some schools of psychology seek to explain away the phenomenon of religion. But in these attempts of theirs these schools only stultify themselves. If mind or consciousness be nothing material and can be explained in terms of matter and mechanical forces or in terms of the mechanism such as a study of mind or consciousness whatever we may call it is no psychology which is by definition the science of mind or consciousness.

### Philosophy of Religion

Truly speaking, philosophy of religion is concerned with interpretation and asks in determine whether religion as a phenomenon can give us an insight into the ultimate nature of man and the world and into our basic relation between them. Philosophy of religion in its procedure nevertheless collects all relevant data furnished by some sciences. Psychology of religion is indeed one of these sciences the rest being sociology, archaeology and anthropology. Sociology has a direct bearing upon philosophy of religion.

because of the fact that religion is as old as human society and that religion developed along with social development.

Archaeology deals with the relics of the past. Excavations all over the world have placed immense material at the disposal of researchers into the past. With the help of those, historians have been trying to reconstruct the earlier stages of civilization. Anthropology is comparatively a new science and is broadly the science of man and his culture. This science for the most part makes generalizations from the study of the existing savage people and societies. And quite a mass of facts regarding primitive customs, beliefs and practices, religions and other, have been brought to light by the explorers of the savage world. Philosophy of religion however concerned as it is with the question of the origin of religion must utilize the contributions of these sciences to the stock of human knowledge.

#### A Speculative Study

But it is not true that philosophy of religion is nothing but a study that only systematizes the results of these few sciences. A systematication on the part of philosophy of religion of the researches of these sciences is out of the question, firstly because philosophy of religion is no science in the strict sense of the term and secondly because philosophy of religion does not accept the data supplied by these sciences as final. I must say at the cost of repetition that philosophy of religion is a speculative study and is no science in the narrow sense of the term, which proceeds by way of observation, induction and deduction. Again though philosophy of religion may begin with the data supplied by some sciences, yet, philosophy of religion proceeds by sifting out the relevant from the irrelevant, the meaningful from the meaningless and the absurd.

Moreover, philosophy of religion has by negating the very scientific mode of explanation and by deprecating the attempt some anthropologists make to trace the developed organized religions to some primitive cults or customs.

The mechanical explanation of the more developed by the less developed is perhaps valid in the sphere where there is no essential difference between cause and effect. Therein an effect which appears rather complex is found on analysis to be a mere arrangement of some simple facts. Any mechanical whole is a case in point. A machine, say, so engine, is a whole. But, as we see, it comes about by an arrangement of some elements each of which was originally a fragment. However, the mechanical sort of explanation fails altogether in the case of the phenomenon called growth.

If we study an organism, human or other, we shall find that the organism as it stands now has developed out of a tiny seed. An oak as it exists now has come out of an acorn. But the process of growth or development remains unintelligible. If we consider mechanical explanation the only possible explanation available to us. We do not quite see how the seed, soil etc., water and light can bring by their combined functioning a stately tree into existence. These causal conditions doubtless function and together. But the effect does not occur all at once. On the contrary, they give rise to the phenomena of growth, in the sense that the tree, the final effect, takes shape only by some stages. So, if we want to understand the process of development, we have to fix upon the last step of the process at which we find the tree in its full and final form; and if we now look into this last step we understand the drift of the process of growth. We see that the tree in its

existence lights up the whole process, in the sense that it all shows that the tree is the end the process of growth aims at and finally achieves. But this end the seed by itself did not reveal. So here we reverse the very mode or explanation. We explain what precedes by what succeeds in the process; that is to say, we here adopt teleological explanation which consists in positing an end or purpose before the process of growth.

Now as regards religion, it might have had a very crude beginning. The beginning was indeed a seed with a core covered by the husk of some queer beliefs and primitive customs; and the core and what

it contained was increasingly revealed in the process of growth which culminated in organized religions with their ecclesiastic elements. Hence in order to solve the problem of the origin of religion as such we must have in our study all the existing religions. This is exactly the point of view of philosophy of religion. It, unlike the science of religion in the ordinary sense, undertakes a searching analysis of the contents of the developed religions and thereby brings out the essential nature and implication of religion as a human phenomenon, and precisely in this respect philosophy of religion transcends all sciences.

## The Meaning of Religion

Sir Esme Wythe-Tyson  
(United Kingdom)

The materialists are constantly telling us that religion is both the opium of the people and the means of governing them.

What religion, or the teachings of the greatest thinkers that the world has ever known, had degenerated to, might partially be described under one or both these headings. But what was intended by the original Teachers—the Founders of the Faiths—was obviously the exact opposite of these descriptions.

In every case, the aim of a major world-teacher was, in the first place, to clarify the mind of man about what was essentially true; in the second, and by that means, to teach him how to govern himself in order that he might be free from the tyranny of external discipline.

It is always the Commissar in man, not the Yogi, that seeks to dominate and govern others, the materialistic power-addict who sees the world as a temporary residing himself and his theories as a tyrannous directive; and this is true

even though, and when, the Commissar is found in clerical clothing. It is always the refusal of men to accept the duty, burden, and privilege of self-discipline advocated by the Masters which leads to the dictatorship and tyranny of Church and State. For, by their refusal to be governed by their highasi conscience, men themselves begat the conditions that necessitate external government. Their own lawlessness calls for the making and imposition of laws.

Regarding the chaos that always comes from lack of self-discipline the first thought that occurs to the onlooker is the need for control; and what should come from a man's inner root-nature has to be imposed from without, robbing him of his potential rights, character and dignity.

Aware of his own weakness, and yet unwilling to conquer it, man has to admit the need for external government, and uphold it; and this is the first step on the downward path to tyranny, and, even worse, the replacement of the spiritual

hypothesis as to the nature of man with the materialistic hypothesis which assures him of his dependence on externals, not only for civic rules but for every aspect and detail of his life.

### Need For a Rational Outlook

Organized religion, which should have preserved the corrective idea, and maintained man's right and capacity to govern himself, has itself degenerated into a form of external government as jealous of its power as any system of State.

Nevertheless, religion, or rather, the exalted mental concepts upon which all the major faiths were originally based, still remains the hope of the world, and the only conclusive answer to dialectical materialism.

But in order to rediscover these concepts, which alone can save man from devolution and his world from dissolution, we must separate them from the disquieting superstitions, myths and priest-made dogmas that have veiled their true nature. Religion must be rationalized and made realistic; for a little clear-thinking must surely convince us that in a world which tends to become more and more scientific, with inhabitants trained to think logically and reasonably, religion, which depends on faith rather than understanding, belief rather than knowledge (of science), must inevitably lose its hold on the minds of men and, because of this fact, cease to be a power in their world.

This is the great peril that confronts humanity today, for unless religion is rationalized, it will perish; and if it perishes, with it will go man's last hope of evolution.

For when it is rationalized, true religion based not on creeds and dogmas of the priesthood, but on the Divine Science on which we read in the Upanishads, and in the scriptures of many

other faiths as well as in the philosophy of Plato, provides mankind with its one and only means of evolving to a higher species. It is obvious that, for many millennia now, the human race has been in the state of the Centaur—half man, half animal—the equine portion maintaining its contact firmly with the earth, the frustrated human torso striving desperately towards the stars. To account for this painful dualism, many theories have been put forward. Probably no better diagnosis has been made of it than Paul's: "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

What we would, the highest aspiration of the human heart, has always been to rid ourselves of our animalism and to become wholly men, or Holy Men. When this desire consciously enters into any man, he has taken the first step on the evolutionary path. Unfortunately the greater part of mankind have not taken this first step. They are still enduring and taking as normal, the endless tug of war between what they usually term the higher and the lower instincts. In the majority of cases, the lower instincts have a habit of winning. All too often we see evidences of "man" having given up the struggle and the animal nature all too evidently in charge. The toran has ceased to aspire; almost it seems, it has ceased to live. Devolution has set in.

### Avatars and Saviours

At the other end of the scale, there are a few men that others, in their ignorance of what is really happening, have called Avatars, Saviours, Redeemers who have actually achieved the miracle of evolution while they walked the earth. They have, to all intents and purposes, put off the animal nature and have become

wholly man—a man who can know and say that 'the spirit quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing;" "Brahma is all; all else is Maya." They have negated the animalism within. They have noughted the lusts of the flesh, and renounced all violence to their personal lives. No attachment, therefore, blinds them to the animal life. They have become the *Homo sapiens* that ordinary men fondly, but quite erroneously, imagine themselves to be.

Krishna, Buddha and Jesus are among the most notable of these evolved men. But there is a far greater number of "unknowns," and because they are unknown, the implication of their existence and achievement is lost to the world.

On the other hand, whenever the Evolutionist is known and his new status has to be faced, the comparison between him and unevolved men seems too odious to bear home, and despite the persistent plea of the evolved man that all mankind should "follow them," they are, instead, deified and worshipped and a thousand different theories are put forth to account for them and for their superior, purified and exalted characters.

This is, of course, partly because neither the priests who prosper by making themselves mediators between the people and the new "God"; in other words, by explaining Him to lesser minds by means of one theological theory or another, nor the congregations themselves, had, in pre-Darwinian times, any inkling of the evolutionary idea. The connection between visible man and the animals was still a mystery. Man's essential superiority was taken for granted even while he was sacrificing and slaughtering for food the lesser animals, and generally behaving like the worst sort of beasts of prey.

It is true that all organized religions,

all world-faiths, have held up some superior pattern, some great ideal—usually the concept of a perfect man—to whom their followers must aspire; but why and how they should aspire and what was the true nature of the ideal, has not been fully sought for the simple reason that the true explanation has rarely been perceived or known.

Nevertheless, the fact that men, in exceptional cases, had evolved, had become beings so superior to the majority of mankind as to seem to be almost another species, remained as the hope of the world. They provided the ideal, the goal for the world he Evolutionist and the concrete proof that the transition might be made.

They still provide that proof. Moreover, they provide the eternal answer to all forms of materialism which teaches that progress or evolution can only come about by the manipulation of external conditions, for their achievement rests squarely on the purification and expansion of mind. It was the quality of their thinking, and therefore of their acting and living, that made them what they were; and the mind of Christ, and the mind of Buddha remain in their teachings for everyone to read and emulate.

#### Spiritual Evolution

When we face this simple and scientific rationalization of the meaning of religion we realize how misguided and misled the people have been who, instinctively feeling the "need" for religion, and having the conviction that it contained the answer to their problems and the way out of their sorrows and pains, have turned to the charlatans for enlightenment. The complicated and often pagan theological explanations given to them by a priesthood as ignorant of practical experience as those they set up to teach, merely

befogged them, and when enlightenment dawned having surrounded religion with so many inventions myths and mysteries born of their own imaginations and calculations, the priesthood naturally felt that the exposures of science which constantly discredited their theories were a menace to religion's very existence.

Neither they nor their followers seem yet to have perceived that it is because some theories are untrue, that they can be overthrown by science. All that is basically true in religion the Divine Science, which is the real explanation of religion, being founded on spiritual fact, can never be in any danger from the theories of materialism, for the way of evolution is based on the achievement of those who have evolved just as positively as the atomic theory is based on the evidence of those who have split the atom.

Nevertheless Divine Science ascends even beyond the theory of evolution which is always a three dimensional term

dependent on the space-time conception of life which is always four-dimensionally variable. For evolution presupposes a process of progress from one space-time point to another, whereas in the Eternal all is complete. All is, and there is no becoming.

Consciousness, which constitutes man's true being, provably contains here and now, not only the mind of the average man but also the mind of Christ, and all men have access to consciousness, and therefore to the completed Ideal, whether one calls that the Atman the Nous, the Archetype or the son of God. This fact makes spiritual evolution a present possibility instead of a distant aspiration.

Therefore we can say that whereas the absolute truth of Divine Science is the present existence of the Perfect Pattern which we see as being made by the process of evolution and the Perfect Pattern includes the Perfect Man the manifestation of Eternal Life.

## Glimpses of My Acquaintance With Spiritual India

Prof. Jean Herbert  
Geneva University

(Text of a Discourse given at the Sivanandashram in March 1956)

Maharaj and Friends

I have not come to India to teach or to speak. I have come to India to listen and to learn, because I feel that India, which has already taught so very much to the world through many centuries which has given so much of her wealth of every kind to the rest of the world still has much more to give. Her message has so far permeated only very small sections of the outside world. For the last quarter of a century I have made it my work to come periodically to India to sit at the feet of her sages and her saints to receive what little of their teaching I was capable of receiving. I know it was a very, very

small fraction indeed but still I have done my best to carry that over to countries of the West by translating and publishing the sayings, writings and teachings of the great sages and saints of India. Now I believe that the time has come to bring over still more to Europe more particularly, and this is why I have again come to India, and I hope, with God's grace to come many more times to try to receive a little more of the teachings of this holy land and to take it back.

Swami Sivananda

This is the first time I have the great privilege of coming so high up the Ganges.

valley, to Rishikesh, and also of sitting at the feet of the great Master, the great Saint, who was so kind as to admit me in his presence, Swami Sivananda Saraswati. The Swami I have known for many, many years through correspondence, and I have read a great number of his writings which he has been so kind to send me very frequently. Of course, you all who constantly live in his presence, know his teachings, understand them, and what is still more important, apply them, far better than I can. So it would be preposterous of me to speak of his teachings, because everyone of you in this room can tell me much more than I could say myself. I should just like to mention one or two points which have impressed me and which have impressed many people in Europe, who like me, had not the privilege of seeing him before.

First of all, the fact—which we confirmed to me today again—is that Swamiji has not remained in the realm of the abstract or even of intellectual and spiritual teaching, but that at the same time, he has put into practice one of his great maxims ‘Do good,’ and I see with infinite pleasure today that the Ashram, although not rolling in wealth, as far as I can see, still manages to feed hundreds of people every day. I again heard the story today of the work that Swamiji has done for the lepers in this part of India, and many other instances. Now, so far to my knowledge, the great saints and the great sages of India in most cases have done either of the two: either they have given abstract spiritual teachings, or they have rather refrained from that and gone into social, practical work. Often it was the Master who gave spiritual teachings to his disciples, and the next generation after him went into social work, building hospitals, dispensaries, schools, doing famine and flood relief work, etc. Apparently one of the teachings which we can

take from Swami Sivananda is that both can be combined, and this is extremely important for us, Europeans, who attach so much importance, rightly or wrongly, to the visible, tangible, practical effects of the teachings.

### Ethical Basis of Yoga

Another point that has struck me about the teachings of Swamiji is the great insistence with which he speaks and writes,—at least ‘writes,’ because I have not had the privilege of hearing him speak, but I understand that he speaks with very much insistence—on the ethical basis of Yoga: I might say the elementary starting point. Now in the West many people are attracted by Yoga, and I must say, the most vulgar forms of Yoga, the cheapest and the most dangerous. I believe if I could teach people a Yoga that would enable them to sit on a bed of nails, I should have thousands of people coming to learn it, but when you come to speak of high philosophy, people are not so much interested; and also, like many people in India, too (because that exists also in this country), they think that they can learn Yoga in one or other of its forms, straight-away, totally ignoring the ethical prerequisites.

One of the books I have published in French and German is Swami Vivekananda’s *Raja Yoga*, in which, as you know, he takes up all the eight points of Raja Yoga in their regular order. But most people, I am sorry to say, just skip the chapters referring to the first two points, Yama and Niyama, because they think that they know all about it, and this is nothing new for them. They want to go straight to what is new, what is interesting to them, and the result is that many of them start practising Asanas, Pranayama and all the rest, often with the most disastrous results.

I have known personally a number of

people, and when I say a 'number,' it runs into several dozens, who have become insane or whose health was totally ruined by such practice of Hatha Yoga and Raja Yoga because they ignored the ethical prerequisites. This is the reason why I am extremely glad that Swami Sivananda deals at great length on these and with much insistence, emphasizing the essential, basic, simple self-evident truths with which one must start any Yoga. I have met many people in Europe who have come under his influence through his writings and possibly through correspondence, and I have so far not known of such cases of people losing either their mental or bodily health,—and I know how extremely difficult it is to correspond with a Master whom you have never seen, who lives on the other side of the world. This much I can say of what I have seen about the results of the teachings of Swami Sivananda in Europe, in the West.

I should not presume to say more, because anything else you know far better than I do, but just to sum up, as far as I have been able to judge, this influence has always been very good exceptionally good and the only good on all the people who have come into contact with him through his writings, who have followed his teachings and who have accepted him as their Guru.

#### Popular Insistence on Advaita

Now, since you have asked me to speak at greater length perhaps I may say a word of what I feel the West could at present get from India in the way of Yogic and spiritual teachings. So far, considerable insistence has been put on the Advaita Vedanta and this was only natural because the Westerners who have come to India have constantly ridiculed all your religious beliefs. They could find no words bitter enough, nasty enough, to speak of the cult

of Sri Ganesh, Ma Kali, Hanumanji and many other personal forms of God, whom you worship in this country. For this reason Indians who come to Europe have become extremely loath to speak of them, because they are afraid, and often rightly so, that people will laugh at them, despise them and just turn away in disgust. The result is that such Indians for more than one century, have only been speaking of Sankara as the great teacher of Advaita.

In the West, we like philosophy very much. We are all very proud of our intellect. We all believe that the intellect is the highest faculty in man and everything else is to be judged by it or, rather by what little we may have of it. When Indians introduce Sankara's Advaita philosophy, it is a very fine, a very beautiful philosophy which everybody can respect. Whenever I ask a newly-met Hindu what school he thought he belongs to, he invariably replies saying, "I am a follower of Sankara." But in ninety-nine out of hundred cases, it is not true. After I have told him of my own opinion my own respect for the Panenetic religious beliefs of India, then he generally comes out and tells me what his *Ishta Devata* is and what it means for him. Now I believe that the time has come when Hindus can really speak of the worship of the personal God, and this is one reason why I was very glad to see that Swami Sivananda had published a book on the *Lilas of Sri Krishna*.

#### Sanskrit Scholars in Europe

For more than one century in the West, your scriptures have been studied by very great Sanskrit scholars. We have had in Europe and we are proud of it, Sanskrit scholars as good as you have in India, but for one thing they are very few and for another, they happen to be exclusively linguists, grammarians and philologists, and their interest in Sanskrit is about the

history of language and the relation between different languages, about etymology, comparative grammar, syntax and so forth and in that they are extraordinarily scholarly. But it has come to a point when not only are they not interested in the substance of those scriptures, in the deep meaning but they do not even suspect that there may be a deep significance, still less a spiritual message.

#### Need for Interpretation

This lasted until about fifteen years ago when apparently owing to the publication of the sayings and writings of modern sages of India, it began to dawn upon a number of people that after all, the *Puranas* and the *Maha Bharata*,—not to speak of the *Upanishads* and *Brahma Sutras* and others—actually have a deep spiritual message. Now this idea has gone forward and when books are published expounding one interpretation or another, of the spiritual message and teachings of the *Bhagavad Gita* or of the *Kena Upanishad* or of some section of the *Maha Bharata* people no longer just laugh it aside. They are surprised of course, but they are interested, and I believe this is what India can at present give to the West.

#### Role of Advaita Philosophy

This does not mean that I am underestimating the value of Sankara's Advaita philosophy. His Advaita is a path perhaps the highest path of all, but I cannot help remembering Sri Ramakrishna who knew what he was talking about when he said that there is not more than one or two men in a century who can follow it to the end. Even if this was also an underestimate, it means that it is not really, for the masses. In spite of it, Advaita philosophy, to me has a considerable and unique value. Its value is twofold. First of all it supplies a background, against which you may view your own religion, your own Sadhana,

your own philosophy, your own Yoga, your own beliefs, and owing to the very existence of that background you see that it is consistent, that it is logical that it offers no substantial contradiction with any other path, and therefore you need not quarrel with people who have different paths, you need not say that your own Sadhana is better and higher than others, but you can follow it efficiently, leaving others to do likewise. This is what I mean by saying that Advaita philosophy serves as a background.

It is also a safeguard against excessive, irrational and irresponsible excesses in the blind following of any one path, whether it is Bhakti Yoga or Raja Yoga or Teatre Yoga or Hatha Yoga. I believe, if you keep in mind the Advaita philosophy of Sankara you are quite safe, and as a matter of fact, one thing which I never tire of repeating to Westerners is that Sri Sankara himself was a great Bhakta. He wrote hymns not only to Siva, but to Sri Krishna the Divine Mother and to others, and his conception of Advaita was so lofty, so total, so perfect that it enabled him to view at the same time in its proper perspective and its proper use the worship of the personal God.

#### Personal God

To my mind that worship of the personal God is something which suits an enormous majority of Westerners far better than the attempts at Advaita philosophy. As you know, in the West most people are Christians. Those who are not Christians have been born and brought up in Christian circles. The Jews are also worshippers of the personal God and therefore, it is a thing which all our ancestry, all our preparation, all our education has made us fit to follow, with some fruit. Of course, one is tempted to ask, "If in Europe we are born and bred in it, what is the use of

going to India, for it? Perhaps there is a very good reason, possibly among many others. It is that in India you have preserved an extraordinarily precise and effective technique for worship. By that I do not mean the rituals in the Puja which have a considerable value and efficacy, but which are not for us, because each deity has appropriate Pujas, but I mean the technique of the Sadhana in the worship of any individual godhead, and this, I believe, you find, although very few people in India seem to care about it at present in the *Puranas* and *Ithasas*.

#### Purpose of 'Mythology'

As you know, these scriptures as well as some small sections of the *Upanishads* and *Brahmanas* also contain a considerable amount of philosophical teachings, some theories of cosmogony and so forth, but they also contain a great number of narratives—narratives which we have called myths. 'Myth' is a word which has a very nasty association in the minds of Christians, at least. They think that the beliefs of all other religionists are myths, while their own are true. Now, these narrative portions which are looked upon sometimes as good poetry, but in all cases as totally devoid of practical spiritual value, to my mind, have considerable practical value for Yoga.

Of course, I have studied only very few of them. I do not know how many tens of thousands of them may be in the Hindu scriptures. I have studied eight or ten, that is all, so I have only studied about one in a thousand. But this study has been enough to convince me absolutely that each one of those stories, of those so-called myths, embodies a very strict, a very scientific technique for the Sadhana, for spiritual development. At first I was inclined to take from those narratives only what I thought essential—just the actual

frond of the story and to disregard as mere poetical embellishments the description of the forests and birds and plants and prasas offered to the Lord and so forth, and I left them aside, thinking that I would go to the essential. But after trying with some of them I came to realize that I was wrong and that in those narratives in the *Puranas* and *Ithasas* there is not one single word which is not heavy with meaning and with practical teachings. I think that if you study them, you will be able to bring out the most minutely detailed technique of Yoga.

#### A Graphic Example

Now I shall give you just one instance of one myth which I have studied at great length. Some of you may remember in the *Maha Bharata* there is the story of a fire in the forest of Khandava. The forest of Khandava belongs to Indra, and Indra protects it against fire, because all living beings live in that forest. Agni wants to eat up that forest, or, rather he has been instructed by Brahma to go and eat it up. He goes and tries and fails, and then in order to succeed, on the advice of Brahma, he goes to Sri Krishna and to Arjuna who happened to be in the vicinity, and he asks them to help him. So Sri Krishna and Arjuna agree and they secure divine weapons from the various gods. Then starts the story of the actual fight where they attack separately each one of the inhabitants of the forest. Now, if you study that story thoroughly, you will see that each one of those entities in the forest, whether birds, or fish, or trees, or semi-divine beings represents something very specific which we have in our nature, and which we have to conquer or overcome or destroy or assimilate or of which we have to enlist the help if we want to go ahead in our Sadhana. In each one of the sectional episodes you will find that a

different method is employed I will just give you one point

### Symbolical Allusions

As I see it, the combination of Arjuna and Sri Krishna has a significance. Arjuna represents the human and Sri Krishna the Divine. While against some of the entities Arjuna acts alone and in a certain way, again Sri Krishna acts alone against others. Again, against still others, Arjuna and Sri Krishna act together. This shows that along a certain path of Sadhana, at least that of destroying the forest of dualities which is represented by the Khandava Vana there is one part or some part of the work which has to be done by individual human being alone (Sadhaka) others about which he has absolutely nothing to do, but to leave them in the hands of the Divine who will do the work for him and others again in which close co-operation of a very definite nature is required between the human and the Divine. This distribution of the task in three sections, to my mind contains extremely important, practical hints in many Sadhanas at least.

Of course, one can learn much more from the episodes in the myth in the *Maha Bharata*. I mention this just as one in-

stance, but I believe that the same sort of study could be made of many other passages in *Puranas* and *Itihasas*. I had the privilege of discussing this point with several gatherings of Pandits and scholars in Madras, Banaras and Vrindavan, and I was glad to see that they agreed with me, and this is why I was so bold as to put this before you. I know there are many scholars and students of the scriptures in this room (Satsang Bhawan of the Sivanandashram) and I very much hope that under the wise guidance of Swami Sivananda who knows the substance and essential of all those teachings they will take the trouble of going into the details of some of these narrative parts of the scriptures. In this way, I believe they can help many people not only in India but also in the West, who are ready to make practical use of those teachings. I stress the word 'practical,' because we have had enough of pure erudition, of learning for the sake of study, of which we make either no use or had use. Many people in the West are now interested in knowing what can be of practical use in spiritual life even as they are interested in knowing what can be of practical use in material life.

### Karma

Man is the creator of his own fate, and even in his foetal life he is affected by the dynamics of the works of his prior existence. Whether confined in a mountain fastness or lulling on the bosom of a sea whether secure in his mother's lap or held high above her head, man cannot fly from the effects of his own prior deeds. Whatever is to befall a man on any particular ebb of time will surely overtake him then and on that date. Scale the heavens, or plunge into the nether regions, or enthrone the quarters of the skies, a thing which you have once given away can never be yours.

(From the *Garuda Purana*, Ch CXIII)

# Comparative Teachings of Religions

## I. On Brotherhood, Cosmic Love and Peace

### Buddhism

1. Whosoever in this world harms living beings, and in whom there is no compassion for living beings, let one know him as an outcast. (*Sutta-Nipata*)

2. One act of pure love is greater than spending the whole of one's time in religious offerings to the gods. (*Dhammapada*)

3. Those in whom wisdom and meditation meet are not far from peace. (*Dhammapada*)

### Christianity

1. Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me. (*Bible*)

2. All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to ye, do ye even so unto them. (*B*)

3. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. (*B*)

4. And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, peace be to this house. (*B*)

5. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. (*B*)

### Confucianism

1. All men are brothers. (*Proverbs*)

2. What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others. (*Anecdotes*)

3. Love makes a spot beautiful. Who chooses not to dwell in love, has he got wisdom? Love is the high nobility of Heaven, the peaceful home of man. To lack love is to lack wisdom. (*Mencius*)

4. Peace is worth a thousand taels of gold. (*Proverb*)

### Hinduism

1. The whole world is pervaded by God. (*Isopanishad*)

2. Men gifted with intelligence should always treat others as they themselves wish to be treated. (*Mahabharata*)

3. He who beareth no ill-will to any being, friendly and compassionate, without attachment and egoism, balanced in pleasure and pain, and forgiving, he, my devotee, is dear to Me. (*Bhagavad Gita*)

4. The peace of the Chitta can be brought through the practice of sympathy, tenderness, steadiness of purpose, and dispassion towards all forms of good or evil. (*Patanjali Yogasutras*)

### Islam

1. No one of you is a believer until one loves for none's brother what one loves for oneself. (*An Nawawi*)

2. Love is this—that thou shouldest account thyself very little and God very great. (*Sufi Saying*)

3. The garment of peace never doth fade. (*Saying*)

### Jainism

1. Towards your fellow beings be not hostile. (*Sutra Kritanga*)

2. Indifferent to worldly objects, a man should treat all creatures in the world as he himself wishes to be treated. (*Jaina Sutra*)

3. Have compassion to all beings. (*Jaina Sutra*)

4. Attachment to false fleeting things stains the purity of peace. (*Saying*)

### Judaism

1. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (*Leviticus*)

2. But I say unto you—deeds of love are worth as much as all the commandments of the Law. (*Talmud*)

3. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who bringeth good tidings, who publisheth peace. (*Isaiah*)

## Shintoism

1. Irrespective of their nationality, language, manners and culture, men should give mutual aid and enjoy reciprocal, peaceful pleasure, by showing in their conduct that they are brethren. (*Tenrilyo Doctrine*)

2. We make loving kindness our Shintai representative (*Saying*)

3. Peace in the land, safety in the household, and abundant harvest. (*Prayer*)

## Sikhism

1. As thou deemest thyself, so deem others. (*Granth Sahib*)

2. Deem the body in which there is no love a place of cremation. (*Farid*)

3. They love not who live in counting the favours and frowns of love. (*Angad*).

## Taoism

1. Extend your help without seeking reward. (*Kang Ying P'ien*)

2. Regard your neighbour's gain as your gain, and your neighbour's loss as your own loss. (*Kang Ying P'ien*)

3. To the good I would be good. To the not good I would also be good in order to make them good. (*Tao-te-Ching*)

## Zoroastrianism

1. The three greatest concerns of man are these—to make him who is an enemy a friend, to make him who is wicked righteous, and to make him who is ignorant learned. (*Shaya't-na-Shayast*)

2. That nature alone is good which will never do unto another whatever is not good unto its own self. Do not do unto others that which is not good to yourself. (*Zoroastrian Scripture*)

## II. "Ahimsa" or Non-Injury

1. Let not any man injure life, but he as assiduous in cherishing the life of another as his own; for Ahimsa is the highest religion.

—*Tirthankara Mahavira* (Jainism)

2. So, let us for all creatures, great or small, develop a boundless heart and mind. Aye, let us practise love for all the world.

—*Gautama Buddha* (Buddhism)

3. Thou shalt not kill.

—*Jesus Christ* (Christianity)

4. He who saveth a life, shall be as though he had saved all mankind; for there is no beast on earth, nor bird, which liveth with its young but the same is a people like unto you.

—*Muhammad* (Islam)

5. A man should prefer good to harm, good deeds to sins, virtue to vice, light to darkness.

—*Zoroaster* (Zoroastrianism)

6. Is there any one maxim which ought to be acted upon throughout one's whole life? Surely, the maxim of loving kindness is such.

—*Confucius* (Confucianism)

7. One Self dwells in all. All are manifestations of the one God. By injuring another you injure your own self. By serving another you serve your own self. Love all. Serve all. Hate none. Insult none. Injure none, in thought, word, or deed.

—*Swami Sironanda* (Hinduism)

### III. Essence of Duty

#### Hinduism

This is the essence of duty. Do not do to others what if done to you will dislike.

#### Buddhism

Do not do to others that which may give pain to your own self. Give that happiness for others which you want for your own self.

#### Christianity

Whatever you want that others should do to you, do that yourself to others. For this is the rule.

#### Islam

None becomes a true believer until he loves his brother even as he loves himself.

#### Zoroastrianism

That nature is really good where it will not do to others what is not good for itself.

#### Taoism

Consider that your neighbour's gain is your own and that your neighbour's loss is your own loss.

#### Confucianism

Do not do to others what you do not wish that others should do to you.

#### Sikhism

Consider others as you consider yourself.

#### Hebraism

Do not do to your fellow-men what is painful to yourself. Thus is the whole of the Torah and the remainder is only a commentary on it.

#### Jainism

We should consider no happiness and misery, in joy and grief, all beings as our own self, and therefore one should not do to others what would be undesirable for one's own self.

### IV. "Mahavakyas" or Great Utterances

#### Buddhism

Buddham saranam gacchami,  
Dhammam saranam gacchami,  
Sanjam saranam gacchami—  
I take refuge in Buddha  
I take refuge in the law  
I take refuge in the Order

#### Zoroastrianism

He is but the same one God, though men give Him diverse names. Hoomita, Hookta, Havarehta; Manasni, Gavasnt, Kunasni—pure thoughts, pure words, pure deeds.

#### Judaism

Be still and know "I am God."

#### Islam

La ilaha illallah, Mohammad nr rasulullah—  
There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

#### Jainism

Ahimsa Parshmo Dharma—  
Non-injury is the highest religion.

#### Wendism

Tat Twam Asi—  
That thou art.

#### Christianity

I and my Father are one.

#### Confucianism

The three secrets of happiness are to see no evil, hear no evil, and do no evil.

#### Sikhism

Ek Omkar—Sat Nam—

There is but one God; His Name is Truth

#### Taoism

Tao is everywhere. It is priceless treasure. It is Guardian and Saviour. It is the Sanctuary, where all beings find refuge.

A Concord, deep, unimagined at a world untrod,  
An infinite Harmony whose name is God.

*Dr Reinhold Niebuhr*

God grant me the serenity  
To accept the things I cannot change,  
The courage to change the things I can,  
And the wisdom to know the difference

*I dith Carell* I realize that patriotism is not enough I must have no hatred or bitterness in my heart.

*Zoroaster* Doing good to others is not a duty It is a joy, it increases your own health and happiness

*Robert Ingersoll* I belong to the Great Church which holds the world within its arm'd aisles, that claims the great and good of every race and clime, that finds with joy the grain of gold in every crass, and floods with light the germs of good in every soul

*Judaism* Listen, Israel! Our Ever-Living God is a Single Life Therefore love your Ever Living God with all your heart, and with all your Soul, and with all your strength You shall not hate your brothers in your heart You shall not take revenge upon the child of your neighbour, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself I am the Ever living And let these words I command you to day, be in your heart and teach them to your sons and speak about them while sitting in your house and in travelling on your journeys and when lying down and when rising up

What is hurtful to yourself do not to your fellowmen That is the whole of the Torah and the remainder is but a commentary Go learn it! Loving kindness is greater than law and the charities of life

are more than all ceremonies Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?

*Voltaire* The discovery of what is true, and the practice of that which is good are the two most important objects of philosophy

*Sikhism* As you treat yourself so treat others Then shall you become a partner in heaven Regard all men as equal, since God's light is contained in the heart of each

*Jainism* A man should walk about treating all creatures as he himself would be treated In happiness and suffering, in joy and grief we should regard all creatures as we regard our own self, and should therefore refrain from inflicting upon others such injury as would appear undesirable to us if inflicted upon ourselves

*Rudyard Kipling*

East is East and West is West,  
And never the twain shall meet  
But there is neither East nor West  
Nor border nor Breed nor Birth,  
When two strong men stand face to face,  
Though they come from the ends of  
the Earth

*Emerson* The expectation of gratitude is mean and continuously punished by the total insensibility of the obliged person

*Lao Tzu* By the accident of good fortune a man may rule the world for a time But by the virtue of love he may rule for ever

*Goethe's Mother* I always seek the good that is in people and leave the bad to Him who made mankind and knows how to round off the corners

*Horace Mann* Doing nothing for others is the Undoing of ourselves \*

\*A B — For further comparative religious sayings, please refer to pages 86, 92, and 101 to 109

# Hinduism in the Epic Age

(200 B C - 300 A D)

Sri D S. Sharma

This great epic of our race (Ramayana) has moulded the thoughts and emotions of uncounted generations of people in India during past ages. From the peasant in the field and the worker in the factory to the highborn and the scholar, the story of Rama and Sita has been a living one. A story and an epic which has had this powerful influence on millions of people during some millennia of our changing history, must have peculiar virtue in it.

—Jawaharlal Nehru

After the fall of the Mauryan empire, there was a revival of Hinduism consequent on the loss of prestige that Buddhism had suffered. The Ashvamedha sacrifice performed by Pushyamitra, who founded the Shunga dynasty on the ruins of the Mauryan empire, may be taken as the signal for this second Renaissance of Hinduism. It may be said to usher the so called Epic Age during which the Ramayana and the Mahabharata received their final shape as didactic epics.

To this period belong not only the two great epics in their final form but also the code of Yajnavalkya, the minor Upanishads and some at least of the Puranas and some of the philosophical Sutras.

A new school of Hinduized Buddhism known as the Mahayana arose under Kacchikas in the northwest and from there spread to the northern countries of Asia. One of the Mahayana scriptures namely, Saddharma-pundarika is said to be a parallel to the Bhagavad Gita in Buddhism. Two other achievements of Buddhism in this period are the works of Ashvaghosha and Nagarjuna the chisitays of Karle and Nasik the stupas of Barhut and Sanchi,

the sculptures of Gandhara, Maihurs and Amaravati and the earliest of the cave paintings in Ajanta.

Lastly, we should note that it was in this period that Indochina went abroad and colonized Sumatra, Java, Borneo, Malaya and Indo-China and established many kingdoms which were ruled by Indian princes for about fifteen centuries and which remained either Hindu or Buddhist till they were overthrown by Muslims. Thus the Epic Age was a period of great expansion and of a new political outlook.

## Unity of India

Memories of the Asokan empire made the Hindus feel that India in spite of all its complexity of races, kingdoms and creeds was really one. This fundamental unity is enforced in several passages in the Mahabharata and its recognition as one of the great landmarks of our history. The heroes of the great epic are significantly represented as having under their sway the whole of India. The special problem of India then was as it is again today, how to bring about unity in a vast mass of heterogeneous people comprising various races with different levels of culture.

The Brahmanas had learnt a lesson from the Buddhist Sangha. They saw the mistake they had committed in not carrying the message with them. They had made their knowledge a sort of secret doctrine and not a rule of life applicable to all. If the peculiar circumstances of the country made the levelling down of all social distinctions undesirable it was their duty to begin the work of levelling up. As they had failed to do this Buddhism which they regarded as heresy, became the

religion of the paramount state under Asoka. That state was now declining and along with it the religion it supported.

When the moral severity of the early Bhikkus gave place to the ascetic beliefs of all the tribes that were taken into the fold of Buddhism their religion began to decline. Moreover the great emphasis laid by Buddha on monastic life rotted society of its most efficient members.

According to the Buddhist scheme of life, as we have seen, domestic virtues were at a discount and many necessary steps in the spiritual growth of man were skipped. Renunciation and contemplation were always preferred to citizenship and action and the principle of Saṃyāsa was believed to be of universal validity. The reaction soon came and there was a chance for the orthodox religion to recover the lost ground. The Hindu Renaissance which was a result of this reaction is best studied to the existing recensions of the Rāmeyana and the Māshakharata.

#### Instruments of Religious Revival

The ancient stories which the people loved were made the instruments of a great religious revival. The old ballads were written, supplemented and so overlaid with didactic matter that they became the Vedas of the multitude. In fact the descendants of the early colonists in the islands to the east of India still professing Hinduism look upon the epics as their final authority in religion. The teaching of the Upanishads was brought home to the understanding of the common man through the stories, the dialogues and the ideal characters in the epics. The gates of the temple were thus at last thrown open to all classes. The knowledge which had remained the exclusive possession of a small class was made available for all.

Not only that, there was a great fusion of the Aryan culture with the Dravidian

culture. The principle on which Siva had been identified with the Vedic Rudra and included among the gods was now extended. The gods and goddesses worshipped by the common people were given honoured places in the Hindu Pantheon. As a result we find in this period the extension of organized sects, the worshippers of Vishnu, of Siva and of Shakti, in addition to the Smritis, who were the followers of the Vedic tradition. We have frequent references to such sects in the Mahabharata. Siva and Durga henceforth become as great deities as Vishnu.

#### Four-fold Purpose of Life

At the same time the Hindu scheme of life which is expressed by the formula of Dharm-arthā-kama-moksha and which had originated in the preceding period was now definitely fixed and widely taught. The sation-builders of the Epic Age clearly laid down that the purpose of life was four-fold, namely, Dharm (duty), Artha (wealth) Kama (desire) and Moksha (liberation). The first three of these constitute the path of Pravritti (active life) and have to be gained in domestic life. That is, a man has to be a member of society and discharge his duties as householder and citizen. He has to acquire wealth, gratify his legitimate desires and at the same time practise virtue. The final stage of life for which his whole career has been a preparation is one of Nivritti or complete surrender and hence Moksha or liberation.

Thus the formula of Dharm-arthā-kama-moksha, which indicates the ideal of a complete life, taking into account all the facts of human nature without doing violence either to the flesh or to the spirit, was a corrective to the monastic Buddhism of the times. It was proclaimed in a thousand different ways in all the literature of the Hindu Renaissance —the two Epics, the code of Manu and the subsequent Puranas.

### Educative Influence of Puranas

In accordance with the scheme of life thus outlined, domestic virtues were glorified and a philosophy of active life was developed. Ideal types of character representing all stages of life were clothed in epic grandeur and set before the nation. We have in the epics not only the ideal Sannyasin or hermit, but also the ideal king, the chaste wife, the loyal brothers, the disciplined student, the virtuous citizen and the faithful servant.

It is difficult to exaggerate the educative influence exerted on the national mind by such concrete examples as Rama, Lakshmana, Sita, Yudhishthira and Bhishma. These characters have moulded Hindu society as Homeric characters moulded Hellenic society. Thus the abstract truths of the Upanishads became vital forces holding together a great civilization when they were incarnated in epic types.

The formula of Dharma-ariha-karma-moksha would have remained only a formula if it had not been exemplified in a thousand ways by the innumerable lives of the characters in the Epics and the Puranas. True, many of these stories are rather wild and fantastic. But behind all their extravagant imagery, one can see the single unalterable and perfect scheme of life which has sustained Hindu society throughout its chequered history.

### Personal God

When religion was thus brought home to the masses, it inevitably underwent some modifications. As we have seen, a highly metaphysical or mystical religion would only be for the few. Buddha wisely restrained from all metaphysical discussions and confined himself to the practical question of finding a remedy for human suffering. The vedantic Absolute, which, according to the famous words of Yajnavalkya in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad,

could only be described by the expression "Not this, not that," is not for the multitude. On the other hand, if it was to become popular, an appeal had to be made to the hearts and imaginations of men. Therefore cold and austere metaphysic was kept in the background and the warm theistic elements in the Upanishads were developed and emphasis was laid on the personal aspect of the Deity. In the place of the impersonal or supra personal Absolute, we have now an Ishvara, a personal God who has created all things, who upholds the order of the universe and who readily responds to the call of Bhakti or devotion.

For instance the Bhagavan of the Gita is not only an immanent principle in the universe, not only "the thread on which the pearls of creation are strung," but also the Friend and the Saviour of man. He assures us that no man who does good ever treads the path of woe, that no devotee of His will ever perish and that those who love Him will soon find Him "entering their hearts and dispelling the darkness of ignorance by the shining lamp of wisdom." He assures us that, in times of national decadence, he appears on the scene to protect righteous men that no sin can readily pursue a man who has taken refuge in him and that peace comes to the soul which recognizes him as 'the Lord of all the worlds, the Friend of all beings and the Recipient of all sacrifices and austerities.' Thus he is not only a creator and destroyer, but also a loving protector. Hence arose in this period the Hindu conception of Trimurti or the threefold form of God. One and the same Ishvara was viewed from three different points of view, namely of creation protection and destruction.

### Doctrine of Avatara

But the most noteworthy development in the Epic Age is the popularization of the doctrine of Avatara or Incarnation. The

doctrine of divine incarnation is but a stop from that of Trlmurti. In the Upanishads the Absolute is described as a Being not only transcendental but also immanent. All created beings are only his partial manifestations. All men are inherently divine. The divinity in man becomes most resplendent when he identifies himself with the eternal order of the universe and carries out the will of God. Great national heroes, whose lives or teachings have become a permanent possession to posterity, are therefore to be reckoned as special manifestations of God on earth. It is Vishnu the protector, himself, that out of his compassion for mankind comes down from time to time in the shape of such god-like men. Thus the feeling for the concrete in religion led not only to the development of theism, but also to the conceptions of Trimurti and Avatara.

#### Temple-Worship

The further logical steps in the same process are images, temples, processions, pilgrimages—in a word, all the paraphernalia of a popular religion with which we are well acquainted. It was inevitable, therefore, that there should be in this period a more systematic organisation of temple worship than in the preceding period. In the Age of the Sutras, the sacrificial altar was more important than the temple. In the Age of the Epics the relations are reversed. The temple becomes more important than the altar and image worship takes the place of sacrifices. The change is all the more significant because it implies that the Dravidian forms of worship and the Dravidian and other non Aryan deities are placed at last on a footing of equality with the Aryan forms of worship and Aryan deities. And the wisdom of the leaders of religion in this period is seen in their exalting the priest who officiated in the Dravidian temples to the rank of Brahmanas. The

result of all the far-reaching changes that took the place in the Epic Period is sometimes briefly expressed by saying that in this period, Brahmanism became Hinduism. The age was undoubtedly one of Renaissance, probably the greatest in our religious history. And the finest flower of this Renaissance is the Bhagavad Gita which, though somewhat earlier than this period is most typical of the new spirit.

The great popularity of this scripture is due to the marvellous way in which it remains faithful to the Upanishadic tradition and at the same time re-interprets it and applies it to practical life. The Vedantic Absolute is there, but it becomes a personal God. The old ideal of Sanyasa is there but it is a sanyasa to be practised in active life. The spirit of sanyasa should pervade all the activities of a man, whether he is a student or a house-holder or a recluse. We should learn to live in the world without becoming worldly, as a lotus leaf rests on water without becoming wet. Our sensa should learn to move freely amidst sense-objects without feeling attraction or repulsion and to act always in obedience to the higher self. True sanyasa does not consist merely in retiring from the world but in subduing it to the purposes of the soul. Pravritti and Nivritti need not be two different paths opposed to each other. On the other hand the former should be a preparation for the latter.

#### Progressive Spirit of the Gita

Similarly, nothing is more typical of the wisdom and the progressive spirit of the Gita than the way in which it extends the traditional concepts of Yoga, Karma, Yajna, Varna and Dharma. Yoga in the Gita is not merely thought control as in the technical Yoga shastra but the whole of spiritual life which aims at union with the Supreme. Karma in the Gita does not mean mere obligatory or optional rites as

In the ritualistic codes, but all human actions having any moral or spiritual value? And the status of one's soul is to be determined ethically and not ritualistically. It is to be judged by standards of moral purity and not of ceremonial purity.

So also Yajna in the Gita does not mean animal sacrifices, nor sacrifices of merely material objects, but all activities of man prompted by a spirit of sacrifice. A life of self control is a sacrifice, a life of

disinterested scholarship is a sacrifice and even a simple exercise in breath-control for the purification of the mind is a sacrifice in its own way. Lastly, Dharma in the Gita is not simply the caste-duty of popular ethics, but the duty imposed on man by his own nature and tendencies as well as by his birth and profession, and it has always to be judged in the light of the end viz., Yoga, which it has in view.\*

## Philosophy and Psychology of Religion —Some Indian Analogies—

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### A Metaphysical Foundations

- 1 Critical Philology Stressing Differences
- 2 Religious Metaphysics Stressing Analogy

### B Practical Applications

- 1 Religious Practices
- 2 Religious Typology

### C Epilogue Escapism or Not?

Critical Philosophy

In dealing with Indian philosophy and psychology, use of the least technical language is the best. The attempt to find absolute parallels for anyone of our Western philosophical problems and formulations is deadly. The Sanskrit student knows how every expression of Indian thought lives only in its own atmosphere and withers like a tropical plant, when transported away into the climate of a different mentality.

The very attempt to translate technical philosophical or psychological texts from the Sanskrit into modern Western languages, is often frustrated by their lack of terms intricate enough in their differentiation to parallel the insights of Indian

meditation experiences and results. We simply cannot describe a land that we have never known in words that grew out of our own familiar countryside.

The Indian psychological landscape is as unfamiliar to us as that of a Dutch painting. In the first place it is infinitely richer, partly because it is much older and more worked over in details.

One only needs to make the experiment of consulting an English Sanskrit Dictionary in order to find equivalents in India for our words Mind, Soul and Consciousness, which are themselves not too well defined in their differentiated use. One will be surprised about the wealth of synonyms which are listed and which presumably correspond to our psychological terms. Well over a dozen Sanskrit words may be named that all designate certain aspects of the world of our consciousness. Those expressions of course, are well defined in Indian psychology but we lack equivalents for them in English, because our own psychology has simply

\*Courtesy Bharatiya Vidyarthi Bhawan Please also see 'A Survey of Hinduism' by Sri D S Sarma

not ever taken notice of the variability of the consciousness realms described by them

### Religious Metaphysics Stressing Analogy

At first Christian missionaries have found out about the translatability of Indian religious terms. Since then one talk of gods (Devas) and "Religion" in India, for which hardly one single word exists. This translatability cannot be taken for granted, but remains subject to questioning again and again as our Western religious vocabulary changes. While Christians stressed at first the differences (just admitting enough parallels to be able to translate) the recent trend in the West among religious metaphysicians has been towards synthesis (e.g. Aldous Huxley) Molster Eckhard's Fuenkeln becomes Aiman etc.

Parallels are found on the lowest level of religious practices (idolatry) as well as on the highest of metaphysical speculation. Transcendence and immanence of the Brahman principle is described in Indian philosophy in the same way as we find the paradox of the unity of transcendence and immanence of the divine background of reality described in Christian metaphysics. In connection with that the incarnation (Avatara) of the highest principle is sought West and East on the level of imagery (Jesus, Krishna) as well as on the abstract level of metaphysics. Even the boldest of Mahayana statements, the Nirvana and Samsara are one and the same (Nagarjuna) can be paralleled by statements of Christian mystics, who will say in essence, that this fleeting world of pain and impermanence turns out under a higher vision, if rightly accepted to be the very goal of salvation ultimate bliss.

As Indian thinkers and Christian monks have both been speculating intricately and in absorption about these questions, there is hardly an idea West or East that

cannot somehow be paralleled on the other side. Not to find parallels turns out often to be a matter of ignorance, which can be overcome by broader studies. In particular is that true of the psychology of religion of the human approach to the underlying miracle of all the Being and of the understanding of the interrelation between the ultimate ground on the one hand the various reflected capacities of man in all their intricate differentiation on the other hand. The Christian God is life and being of everything at the same time he is more clearly, more particularly reflected in the indwelling Holy Spirit in man. Accordingly is the ultimate Brahman life and being in everything but particularly reflected in the highest faculty of man Manas, which is not any fuller of Brahman or nearer to it than everything else and yet more than any other human faculties is the spot of Brahman's coming to light. This differentiation of human faculties or parts of our consciousness world is the very basis for religious practices, by which man tries to do something about bringing out the reality of Brahman, in cult ritual or meditation (Yoga).

### Religious Practices

Religious practices West and East in their higher development do not try to change God's mind, to bring the Brahman down in earth (because it is anyway the very being of all) but to change man's mind so as to become able to appreciate and realize this fact of all existences being carried by the principle of the Ultimate. Such practices, West and East therefore include material, bodily exercises and proceed through the whole realm of man's being to the very highest state of his self realization.

His body, the condition of his health, his daily habits, his food and clothes need to be changed and adapted to the task as

much as content and method of his thinking, the control of the emotional realm, his actions and the scope of his knowledge. This is true for the Christian monk as well as for the Indian Yogi and Sanyasin of the most varied denominations.

In many instances the training methods West and East resemble each other strikingly. Abstinence, Self control, loneliness, silence and concentration on one single object symbolizing the Highest are elementary requirements everywhere.

Among the final achievements of such practices are always mentioned the uninterrupted realization of bliss in the presence of the Absolute, serene peace of consciousness (Ananda) and even the non-clinging to the appearance of such achievements. That is, the monk (Brother Lawrence, Friar of Assisi) and the Yogi in the highest stage of attainment ought not to be any more afraid of the world, of evil and distraction. Having obtained a firm consciousness of God or the Brahman being the only reality, he ought to "return" and live an active life of sainthood (charity, Karma Yoga). He is beyond the differences of activity and passivity, of holy and secular of Nirvana and Maya, of God and the world of flesh. The religious dualism, that is everywhere invariably a starting point of religious yearning and action, is ultimately overcome in a higher vision which discovers itself to be truer, more valid and ultimate.

#### Religious Typology

Christianity has traditionally known just two types of men, the elect and the rejected considering the ultimate fate of men the decisive yardstick for grouping them. In the later medieval evaluation of different sins as forgivable and unforgivable a certain amount of liability was introduced into the earlier Augustinian system. In spite of that, Christian psychological

typology remains mainly based upon quantitative differences. The Saint is nearest to God, the habitual sinner farthest from Him. Only quite recently psychological research, psycho-somatic in particular, has had some influence on Christian theology. The British Guild of Pastoral Psychology and several contemporary American groups have emphasized the importance of psychoanalytical and individual psychological research for religious life, practice and education.

To express it in the popular terms of William Sheldon's characterology it has been found necessary to admit certain qualitative differences of types of equal validity. While Christianity throughout its history has been inclined to evaluate the so-called cerebrotonic temperament with its repressive tendencies as the most fitted for religious life and most successful in its approach to God, it must now be admitted, that the genuine types of the viscerotonic and the somatotonic temperaments have an equal claim on God, and have accordingly to be served in their different ways by the Church, if the Church wants to be universal. This realization, however dawns only apocryphically in a few progressive places in the West.

India too has started out with a quantitative distinction of men religious in terms. The rigid caste system has underlined this approach since early times. The four original castes have sprung up from different parts of the Creator's body, only the highest caste the Brahmanas, having their origin in Brahma's head, the low-class Sudras came from his feet.

Even in the caste-eliminating Buddhist monk community quantitative differences still prevail. People belong to the group of those who will achieve Nirvana in this life, to those who will achieve it in the next incarnation, to those who may have to

return twice, three times or a hundred times, or who, like animals and plant, will have to go through an immeasurably large amount of incarnations before attaining the ultimate goal of redemption from the painful world of Samsara.

Yet alongside this quantitative evaluation of the different creatures India has nearly in its history found out about some basic qualitative distinctions of man's approach to the Ultimate.

The three major ways of attaining liberation, by work, knowledge or devotion are equally valid. All three may lead to the final goal. Every individual will naturally be inclined to follow his own way and should consider anybody else's way as such neither as superior nor as inferior.

This attitude is the basis of traditional Hindu tolerance. Instead of asserting your opinion as right, the adversary's as wrong, so Indian philosopher will usually admit that everybody is right in his honest statements on the basis of his special experiences, associations and use of terms. If he disagrees with somebody, he will openly state that he has to follow different ways, just as surely as the other will have to stay in his own.

The development of Indian religions is, therefore, not particularly marked by proselytising and ardent efforts to convert. In fact that is a point which Christians observers have always missed in India. The Christian message has not found the amount of antagonism in India that it expected and, in a way, wanted.

This attitude of tolerance renders Indian philosophers of religion particularly able to survey the vast field of comparative Religion. In fact several excellent books of this type based on the acceptance of all the varying ways of the world of religious emphases have recently come

to us from Hindu scholars, such as Swami Sivananda, Sadhu Santinatha and Haridas Bhattacharya. In this country it has been Ananda Kumaraswamy who has shown in his numerous publications the deep relationship between ultimate insights of West and East on the basis of accepted difference.

#### 'Escapism or Not?

The appreciation of Indian philosophy and psychology in the West depends on our definition of "sacrament". Ancient Christianity, proclaiming the overcoming of world and flesh by the spirit, the hope for a new creation, a new heaven and a new earth, and the replacement of the old by the new Adam cannot take faun with the search of Indian philosophy for liberation by overcoming and outgrowing the entire psycho physical wrapper of the tree and transcedental Self. It cannot even deny the ultimate reality value of this higher realization.

Modern Western Scientism, believing in progress and finding the highest possible value in man's social, cultural achievements, as far as they are realizable on earth and in time, has to disapprove and to condemn as immoral and unrealistic India's search for the Ultimate, which drastically excludes any stop at values short of the awakening of the Atman to its identity with the all pervading all creating and all consuming Brahman.

Such religious insights would be admissible in the modern West only in so far as they can be shown to serve some other timely purpose (e.g., health, new discoveries, aesthetic pleasure, general welfare).

Such Western ideals on the other hand would be admissible to Indian philosophy only in so far as they serve as a vehicle to prepare man for awakening into the realms of superior truth.

Christianity today is divided. Insofar

as it identifies itself with ancient traditions, it is willing to admit the necessity of mystical insight and to accept a perennial philosophy, that embraces traditions of Western as well as of Eastern origin.

Iosolar however as Christianity represents today in many quarters just a glorified humaism, it too has to reject Indian philosophy (and for that matter also a great deal of its own philosophical tradition) as "escapism."

The most recent trend in religious existential philosophy which sometimes appears today under the title of Incarnation, Christianity is only a derivation of Western secularism and completely shares

with it the rejection of all non-Incarntional achievements, i.e., a lofty goal that may not be realizable in time and space. The Ultimate has thereby been eliminated, the Brahman becomes a fantastic, psychic creativity (a substitute for frustrated libido, etc). The metaphysical formula of an eternal *Hic et Nunc* has been misinterpreted into a secular here and now. The short-sighted anti-metaphysical slogan "Let's come down to earth" becomes dangerously acceptable to many Christian theologians, who prefer to assimilate their Christianity to the demands of the day rather than to become subjects to the nowadays socially deadly reproach of being an escapist, or having too close affiliations to Indian thinking.

## One Lord of East and West

Sri J. G. Phelps Stokes  
(New York)

"There is an essence, entirely hidden by thought constructions, hidden beside all that has body." So declared the Tathagata—he whom the world of today calls, more generally, the Buddha. The Tathagata called that indwelling essence the "Gotta" (or 'Gotta'), and that same hidden essence within himself, the Gotram (or Gottam) Tathagatam; whence, seemingly, our German and English words, "Gott," "God!"

That essence speaking through the Tathagata is shown to the Lokes Sutra to have declared, "I am the Loka Pitā, Swayambhu!—the Father of All, the Self-Existent; .....repeatedly am I born in the land of this living"; and in the Saṃsthākam Section of the Lanka to have declared: "I come within the range of hearing of ignorant people under many names . . . and they address me by those names not knowing they are all names of the Tath-

gata"; and again in the Lanka: "I am all the Buddhas of the past; I am Kaayapa, Krushnacoda, Ksosamuni. In the Dharmakaya (the Body of Reality Itself) all Tathagatas are one!"

### Father of All

The same oft-Incarnted Lord, son of the same "Father of All" but functioning under a different embodiment, had declared through the Avatar Krishna, on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, as will be recalled, "Many a birth have I passed through, O, Arjoo! Whenever there is a decline in virtue and a rise in unrighteousness .....I am born from age to age!" And as explained so lucidly in the Vishnu Purana, "He, who is the spirit of All, and of whom the universe consists, constantly, for the sake of Earth, descends to a small portion of his essence to establish righteousness below!" And, as the beauteous Brahma is held in the same great Scriptura-

to have explained to King Ralvata, "The Being of whose commencement, course and termination we are ignorant; the unhorn omnipresent essence of all things; He whose real and infinite nature and essence we do not know, is the supreme Vishnu [i. e., the supreme "All Pervader"]. .... Through the favour of that imperishable Being am I [Brahma] the agent of His power..... He is at once the creator and that which is created; the preserver and that which is preserved; the destroyer and \*\*\* that which is destroyed. In Him is the world; He is the world; and He, the primeval Self born is again present in the world." In truth He is ever present, whether as Avatar, Tathagata, or Incarnate Christ, and ever as that Indwelling and All-pervading Lord, by whatever name called, who is ever, as St. Paul so truly declared, *all in all!*"

#### First and Last

The prophet Micah, referring to him who was to come so soon in Beiblehem, declared somewhat similarly of him that he was He "Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting!" Jesus himself, speaking to the Jews, declared of himself, as may be recalled, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; He saw it and was glad. Verily I say unto you, heiro Abraham was, I AM!" It may be similarly recalled that on another occasion he declared, respecting the claim of some that he was a son of David, that the Psalmist himself had known him, and had called him "Lord"; and asked, "How then is he his son?" The same Indwelling Self, whom so many call the Christ, had declared long before, speaking through the prophet Isaiyah. "I am the first, I also am the last; In the beginning there am I! And now the Lord God and His Spirit have sent Me!" In His great prayer at the Last Supper, the same Christ had exclaimed to his Father,

"Father, Thou lovest me before the foundation of the world!" St. John called him "the Lamb sacrificed from the foundation of the world," and on another occasion "He who kickeith sway the sine of the world!" St. Paul, the reputed author of the Episile to the Hebrews, declarad in that scripture that the same great Being, the Christ, had even accompanied the Israelites upon their flight from Egypt, saying that He the Christ, was the "spiritual rock" from which they had drunk at that time; and that it was He, the Christ, who had appeared to them, by night, in the "pillar of fire; much as the Avatar Agni is alleged to have done under different circumstances, in early days in India."

#### Guide To Mortals

In one of the earliest Buddhist scriptures, the great Sinhalase commentary on the Vinaya, the opening words are these (as translated by A.J. Goonesinha, Secretary in Ceylon of the Pali Text Society of London): "Let adoration be to the merciful Saviour, who for millions of ages and times beyond reckoning, underwent intense sufferings and pain out of compassion to save the world!" As the Tathagata himself declared in an enquirer, as recorded in the Tevijja Sutta of the Digha Nikaya, "Know, Vassata, that from time to time, a Tathagata is born into the world, an Arhat, a fully awakened one, abounding in wisdom and goodness, ..... a guide to mortals ..... a teacher of Gods and men, a Blessed One, a Buddha. ..... The higher life doth he make known, in all its purity and in all its perfection."

To quote again from the Vishnu Purana, "the Supreme Spirit from whence all this world proceeds; Who is the world, and by Whom the world subsists, and to Whom it will be resolved ..... that Spirit is the essence of all that is, visible or invisible!"

The Buddha taught very extensively of that indwelling essence. In an exceedingly notable instance, as recorded in the Maha Parinirvana Sutra of the Digha Nikaya, in what was virtually his last injunction to his followers, he exclaimed to them, "Atta dipa, Atta sarao!"—Let the Spirit be your lamp, the Spirit your refuge; an injunction so shockingly mistranslated by many modern writers who pluralize the Atta, which of course is *hui One*; and twat the Buddha's injunction to read, "Ba ye lampa uoto yourselves; find refuge in yourselves alone!" (as though the ancient Vedic word "Atta" could possibly be conceived of, understandingly, as plural!)

#### Omnipresent Reality

The words of Jesus in his supreme prayer to his Father at the Last Supper may perhaps be recalled helpfully at this point; those words in which he has sought of his Father, at what was perhaps the most solemn moment of his life, that those whom the Father had given Him "might be One, even as Thou Father and I are one; they in Me as I in Thee; that they may attain perfection in ONE!" Somewhat similarly Krishna had declared at Kurnakabhetra, "Supreme bliss comes to Him who knows Himself as One with Brahman; and sees Himself in all Beings, and All Beings in Himself! He who is established in oneness," he added, "worships Me to All Beings. That Yogi lives to Me! The Wise see the Supreme in All, whether a Brahmin, a cow, an elephant, a dog, or an outcast; for Brahman is the same to All. He who understands is ONE with HIM!"

The above indicated use attributed to the Tathagatas of the word "Gotta" (or "Gotti") for the indwelling essence that is to truth the one to all, may indeed be the earliest recorded source of western use of the name "God" for the same All-pervading Supreme Being. As is so well-known, the

Kshatriyas of Magadha (of whom the Buddha was one) commonly experienced difficulty in pronouncing the sound of the letter "r"; "Sutra" becomes with them "Sutta," "Putra," becoming "Putta," "Dharma," "Dhamma," "Karma," "Kapma," etc. The Sanskrit "Gotta" becoming similarly the Magadhi "Golla"; whence, seemingly, the identical Teutonic word "Gott(a)," and the Anglo-Saxon "God."

#### "Germans"

According to the Greek historian Megasthenes, who accompanied Alexander the Great upon his invasion of Northern India (and who, about 205 B.C., was sent by the Macedonian General Seleucus Nicator as Ambassador to Sandracottus ("Chandragupta"), ruler of the then holy Buddhist land of Magadha, and who lived for some years at Chandragupta's court, there dwelt in the forests roundabout in those days, a tribe of philosophers known as the "Germans," among whom many were so respected and wise that they became the counsellors of kings. Through these "Germans," wrote Megasthenes in his "Indica," "the kings" of those days enquired "concerning the causes of thinda," and through them "learned to serve and worship the Delly." These great Rishis, according to Megasthenes, lived also apart from the Brahmins; and it would seem that Sandracottus (grandfather of the Buddhist King Asoka) must have been at the time among those "kings" who sought their counsel. It is noteworthy that another and larger group of "Germans," called by the Romans "Garmi," occupied to those days most of the territory of northern and central Europe. Through two of their principal tribes of that day, known to the West as the Saxons, (through in the East, seemingly, as Sacas or Sakya), and the Angles, the "Garmi" soon conquered Britain, colonizing the greater

part of it, and giving their joint tribal names, as well as much of their tradition, to the Anglo Saxons of today. By the twelfth century, or thereabout, the "Germæci" had adopted for their home usages the name of their then dominant northern tribe the Teutons, though their earlier name of "Germans" continued to be applied to them by "the English" of later days. Substantially, all interested etymologists have traced our English word "God" "to the Teutons" (the ancient Germæci), but no farther, and have shown that its use, with slight modifications, has become universal among all branches of the "Teutonic" race. And 'yet the first recorded use of the name Gotta or God appears to have been among and by their far earlier forebears, the "Germænes" of ancient India and especially by the Buddha! (The Teutons, incidentally, gradually softened the pronunciation of the initial and terminal "t's" of their abbreviated name, "Teut," till these became, in popular parlance, the "Deutsch" and "Dutch" of today!)

#### Indwelling Essence

Even among the ancient Greeks there appear to have been many who had come to the same concept, not merely of a heavenly Father, but also of an Indwelling Spirit or "Essence" that so truly manifests forth the *All in All*. A brief example is seen in the famed Hymn of Cleanthes, the stoic philosopher of the third century B.C., as preserved by Stobaeus: "O Thou who under several names art adored, but whose power is entire and infinite,.....what myr lives and moves draws its Being from Thee! ..... Thou directest the Universal Spirit which animates all.....and lives in all..... O God, from whom all gifts descend,.....dispel ignorance from the mind of man, enlighten his soul!"

Is it not of great interest to note that

notwithstanding the present so widely repeated allegation that the Buddha "knew no God," yet, just as Jesus declared that the Father and He were One, so, too the Buddha who, as the Tathagata had become One with the indwelling *Essence* of all, not merely called himself to the Lotus Sutra (Kern, tr.), as above quoted, the "Loka Pita Swayambhu," but also, in the Segsthakam section of the Lankavatara (Suzuki, tr.), set forth with utmost clarity the later Christian concept of the Trinity, —of the Dharmata Buddha, the Supreme; of the Nishyanti Buddha, the Outflowing Spirit; and of the Nirvana Buddha, the Incarnate Life Divine; and that he (the Buddha) also appears so clearly to have been at least among those who gave us our word "God" for the Supreme Being Himself!—as for the Supreme "Spirit", who, according to the Vishnu Purana (Wilson, ix, p 216) "is the *Essence of All* that is, visible or invisible!"

#### Incarnate Knowers of Reality

Just as the word "Gotta" or "God" appears thus to have had an origin far antecedent its use in either the Hebrew or the Christian scriptures, so too the Christian and early Hebrew concept of "the Messiah" appears to have had an origin far antecedent both Christian and Hebrew usage of that term. For even in pre-Vedic India the basic concept of the word "Messiah" appears to have been used with substantially the same connotation as today, and as so properly ascribed to the "Lamb of God" throughout the Christian world today. For, according to even the ancient and pre-Vedic Jains, as also to the Jains of today, Paramatma is the highest object of worship; and according to them, this Supreme Being assumes incloiting activity in successive cosmic periods, as the Supreme Jiva Incarnate, as the Conqueror of Samsara—of the realm of

**Ignorance, Change, Illusion, Evil.** As such, and as a Deva or 'succession of Dvas descending from a higher realm, He takes repeated birth in worlds of as yet unawakened or incompletely awakened aspects of His Own Being; and as the Enlightened One, the incarnate Knower of Reality, propounds the Dharma, teaches the Way; and just as all other Avatars have done, shows to All the Path to Salvation through Realization of the Oneness of All That Is, and through the merging of all imagined separateness in that Oneness; and through teaching All to function fully in and as that One that each and All come in time to know the All to be!

The ancient Jains called that One Lord, whether at the time "incarnate" or not, the Parama Deva—embodiment of Infinite Love and Compassion. But they also called Him, when in the successive stages of his earthly Realization, the Paramesthin. Just as Jesus is said in the Christian scriptures to have "increased in knowledge and stature," in the course of His Awakening to become a supreme vehicle of the dwelling Christ, so the Awakened Deva that was to become the Siddha of Perfected Paramesthin, is held by the Jains to have progressed in his fulfilment until ONE with his Source, Paramatman.

#### "Lamb of God"

Why were the successive Tirthankaras (or Avatars) of the Jains called, as each of them appears to have been regularly called, the Paramesthin? May it not be that the central thought to "Paramesthin" was originally that conveyed by its central syllable 'mesh' derived, seemingly, from "maشت," the Sanskrit word for *ewe lamb*, a word so often written "mesht-ka," the "ka" being elsewhere used (e.g., to the Mahabharata, I. 32, etc.) as a name, equally, of Krishna and Vishnu? May not Paramesthin, then, like *Mashika*, have conveyed

originally the idea of Supreme Divinity as incarnate in a "Lamb"—even as in the case of that "Messi-ah" of the Aramaean, Hebrew and Christian scriptures whom St. John and others so often called "the Lamb of God"; of that "Lamb" who according to the book of Revelation, appeared before the throne of the Most High as having been "slain from the foundation of the world," and as "worshipped by every creature?" According to a common Christian interpretation, in the case of Jesus, the "Lamb of God" had in fact been "sacrificed" by his Father by being incarnated, and even crucified, for man's "Redemption"; and had gladly submitted to that "sacrifice"; out of his great Love, and "in Atonement for the sins of the whole world!" It will perhaps be of special interest to note in this connection that in the fourth chapter of the Hebrew book of Leviticus, it is represented as having been expressly prescribed by God Himself that where a lamb is being sacrificed in "atonement for sin" a *ewe lamb* be used as the offering! The Jains hold that have in fact been many "Tirthankaras" or "Paramesthins" in the present world era, the twenty-fourth having been a contemporary of Gautama Buddha, and claim for the word a meaning very similar to that given the words Avatars and Tathagatas by Hindus and Mahayana Buddhists.

It will perhaps be of further special interest to note, here, that the Hebrews were originally Aramaeans from the plains of Mesopotamia, and their next door neighbors on the west of the Indo-Iranians who dwelt in the lands eastward of the Tigris between the Hebrews and the Indo-Aryans of northern India; and that they took to their own language exceedingly many Indo-Aryan words and concepts. May there not have been among the latter the great concept of the Paramesthin, the

Supreme "Messi" or rice lamb, or "Messiah" of later days? Through the successive Hebrew prophets the same concept would appear to have been handed down through generations until Jesus came, as Supreme Embodiment in His day of the one Lord, who, like all previous incarnations of the same Lord, whether called Parameshwari or Avatar, or Tathagata, or by whatever other name or names? May they all be reverenced as embodiments of the same "Son" of the same Father of All; even as "Sooe" who all handed on the same or exceedingly similar basic teachings of Salvation through Self Realization of oneness within and as the One Supreme Lord who, by whatever name or names called it, was and ever shall be the *all in All*? Of the same One Lord, in fact, who through his creative aspect, as the Avatar Krishna declared at Kurukshetra, "manifested forth this entire universe with but a portion of his BEING," while remaining over the undivided *ONE*?

#### Anointed One

It is of course customary for theologists to reiterate that the word "Messiah" means the "Anointed One," as of course it does. But if they would trace the word a little farther back, they would perhaps find an earlier and an even more significant meaning for the term. For why was the "Messiah," the Divine rice lamb (the messi-ka of an earlier people) called the "Anointed One?" All, declared the Buddha in the Lanka, who throughout the

ages have obtained Realization of their Oneness with the Divine Life that is the All in All, have entered, upon Realization, the "Akanishi," the highest of the realms of "form," and have been there "anointed by the hands of all the Buddhas!" thenceupward entering the "Sambhogakaya" or "Bliss Body" of the eternal;—reminding us of St. Paul's teaching about Jesus, that he, similarly, upon his "Atonement" had been "anointed with the Oil of Gladness beyond his fellows!" —The Buddhas come from all the Buddha-lands," declared the Tathagata, again in the Lanka, to welcome and to "anoint" all Awakened Ones who having "crossed the ocean of Samsara," of all illusion and change—have become absorbed in the Bliss of self-realization; for they, too, have entered the ONENESS! May not this "oneness" of which the Tathagata spoke suffice, be properly held to be the same "oneness" that Jesus had in mind when in his prayer of the last supper, he besought his Father that "All whom his Father had given him" might "be made perfect" in one?"

As in the "anointment" of those who "attain" to this oneness, St. John reminds us in his First Epistle that in fact all who have truly known "Him that is from the beginning" are in fact "anointed by Him" and "abide in Him!" "He which hath anointed us," so St. Paul has so plainly assured us, is "He" Who is the All in All; the same Lord, Whom, surely, we should all recognize and revere as the One Lord of East and West alike!

### Beacon - Light

As threads of silver string through crystal beads, let love through good deeds show the Way. —Buddha

Come to Me! Merge thyself in Me. The Master in the hearts of men, trust Him to make your deeds dance to what tune He will. —Bhagavad Gita

Holy Father! Keep them by the power of Thy Name—that they may be one as we are one. —Jesus Christ

So shall we live in harmony. —Rig Veda

# Religion and the New Age

Sri Swami Satyananda

(President, Pure Life Society, Kuala Lumpur, Malaya)

'Everything changes' is a famous maxim of Heraclitus as also of ancient Eastern Teachers, and Bergson, who adopted and elaborated this principle as the central theme of his philosophy, came to the conclusion that "we change without ceasing and the state itself is nothing but change." This change or motion is always going on in human affairs as in everything else.

In the field of sociology and in the light of world history if we make a survey of theocracy, monarchy and aristocracy, plutocracy and, lastly, modern communism and socialism, whatever their form, we cannot but arrive at the generalized conclusion that human society is governed in turn by the ecclesiastical class (Brahmana), the warrior class (Kshatriya), the trader class (Vaisya), and the labour class (Sudra).

In each of these classes we find both good and bad sides and each has had a mission to fulfil. The ecclesiastical rule laid the foundation of all spiritual and secular knowledge; the warrior class encouraged the growth of culture and promoted the sharing of it with other classes, through war or peace; the trader class disseminated the accumulated culture of the preceding periods and has brought the world together through commercial enterprizes and activities.

We are now in an age of transition from the traders' period to the labourers' period. This should be very clear to everyone of us. During this rule by the labour class, or the working class, the economic uplift of the masses and industrialization of society will be the order of the day. Consequently, physical comforts and amenities of living will be distributed widely with less of glaring differences, and this in turn

will break down religious and political barriers and will generally lead to the fusion of races and cultures. It is very probable that with the march of these events, there will be a decline of culture and learning, for these require certain particular conditions such as seclusion and leisure, which, evidently, will be lacking in a highly industrialized and economic-minded society.

In this age in the dawning, what will be the place of present-day religion? What will be the religion of this new age, taking it that men cannot live without a religion? And, how will it be applied to human life?

Everyone knows that the labourer has nearly lost or is at any rate losing faith in religion as it is popularly believed in and practised. With the advance of education he has begun to lose faith in ceremonies and sermons and does not want any passport from the priests to go to a sphere where he will be happy, while he is suffering in this very life. Neither does he care for theology, philosophy or metaphysics, when he has got to struggle for his very physical existence. He looks upon religion as an instrument of exploitation and division. So we see that the religion has hardly any message to the labourer from his own standpoint.

The second question can be answered only when we realize the impulse of the new age. *Equalization is that impulse.* It is this impulse that has led to the class struggle that we see everywhere today and this impulse of the age, due to lack of insight, right understanding, proper direction and manipulation, is expressing itself in violent and destructive ways. True science and true religion teach us the Oneness of Exist-

tence and the consequent Unity and Equality of Mankind. The latest discoveries of science confirm the religious doctrine that the ultimate Reality of the Universe is non-material, i.e., it is Spiritual or Consciousness Itself.

If man is led to realize, through right education and social uplift, the spiritual

basis of the equalizing impulse and the oneness of human beings and becomes conscious of his own spiritual nature and manifests that unity of consciousness in his daily life and dealings with his fellow-men, then alone can uniform harmony and peace reign in society. So Spiritual Socialism (Atmika Samyavada) is the answer to the problems of the New Age.

## Truth—the Source of all Religions

Sri Meeslim Dalidd

(Malang, Indonesia)

"In truth we are one—  
In religion, we are many"

There are so many religions and faiths in the world. Let us inquire whether religion is the highest goal for mankind. As a matter of fact, we hold fast to our religion because it gives us comfort and peace. Religion is therefore a means to us to get something in return. This mentality which has desire as its motive, makes of religion a lie. Of course that is not religion at all. True religion is Self-inquiry. The discovering of Truth in our everyday life.

Our life is a series of contact and relation with human beings, animals, things, ideas and nature. This relation often brings sorrow and conflict to us or to others. Great Teachers were and are born, to show us the way how to understand this relationship, and how to approach it intelligently. When such a Teacher dies, people built a religion or faith on his grave. Then to us prophets, religions, faiths and dogmas become of paramount importance. We forget thereby that to discover Truth in our relationship is the highest goal in life. We are like the man who wants to discover the beauty of the full moon which is caught by the many leaves of the tree under which he sits.

It is very important to consider this

We must be able to put aside all things that are not essential so that the Essential can come into being. Even religion as a tradition must be put aside, so that truth, the true and only religion of all men, can flower. For truth to realize we must be able to offer everything, sacrifice our self-interest, narrowness, pet dogmes, vanity, egoism, everything that is negative in us.

We must go together to the Source. The Source is all-important. To find the Source is a matter of life or death. That is the perfume of our life.

Prophets and great teachers only point out the way to the Source. We must walk alone, search and try to find it. Coming to the Source we are one, but being far away from it we differ in opinion, dispute and are even able to kill our own brother.

With a heart free from desires, the mind being calm, an awareness as pure as the blue sky, the Infinite dawns to our hearts, transforms our lives and fills us with Love and Joy.

In Truth we are one. In Religion we are many. Truth is the highest Reality and anything else is illusion.

To discover the Source which is Truth and putting aside all limited values, and objects of limited value, is the religion which the world needs today.

# Worship of God : An Elemental Necessity

Sri C. Rajagopalachary

"Why can't I be good by myself? Why don't I want God who has not demonstrated His existence in me? I am a member of society and I know what I should do and what I should not do. I do not require to be terrorized into good conduct. And good conduct is all that is wanted, isn't it?"

Thus say many in themselves, especially the 'educated' people, those who have been brought up in decent families and are well and comfortable. Alas, they are wrong!

I would call their confidence an illusion of inheritance. The notion that God and Religion are superfluous and can be dispensed with is born of a state of mind that is itself the product of ages of God and Religion. We are apt to be unconscious of what we possess, thanks to our parents and to society. The sons of a wealthy father may imagine that poverty and unemployment are no problems, and that they are just vices and aberrations born of idleness. Similarly, we who have inherited certain habits of thought and moral feeling are apt to think that God is a superfluity that can be dispensed with. We do not remember that the decent social conduct of which we are so sure is itself the crystallized result of the faith and habit of ages. It is only a matter of time and that too not very long that what we are so sure of in respect of decent social conduct will wear out, as a tree dies when its roots are cut off. We shall be left with a problem far more difficult than what our forefathers faced. The vicious urges of modern times are more manifold than those that disturbed our ancestors.

Selfless Work

It is true detachment and performance

of duties without thought of personal gain automatically give a spiritual satisfaction much above what any personal gain can give. But what will lead you and me to detachment? What will sustain it on occasion of doubt and conflict? What will attain equanimity and maintain loyalty to rules of decency and gentleness when one undeservedly meets with failure or with something worse?

Nothing but fixed faith and devotion to God can sustain us. Not without reason therefore did Tiruvalluvar say:

பற்றுக பற்றற்றுன் பற்றினை  
அப்பற்றைப்  
பற்றுக பற்று விட்டற்கு.

Hold fast to the Lord. Keep that supreme attachment intact so that you may be released from other attachments that bind the soul.

The same great truth was sung by Namalwar almost in the same words.

அற்றது பற்றெனில், அற்றது விடுதிரி  
அற்றது மன்றுறில், அற்றிக்கூற பற்றே.

If attachment has left, Salvation has been reached indeed. And if that detachment is to be fixed unalterably and attachment is to be wiped out completely, surrender yourself to the love of God.

"One can keep away from the things that give pleasure to the senses, but the longing remains. That too will disappear if your eyes turn upwards to God."

(Gita)

## Doctrine of Worship

The Gita teaching running through the 18 chapters is not a mere harmonization or compendium of varying schools of thought, but a single doctrine of worship,

Bhakti alone, it says can achieve that detachment which is true anuyasa.

ஏல்லையில் அங்கலம்  
புஞ்சு பற்றந்தே.

(Nammalvar)

Let us what I have said lead one to the hasty conclusion that God is a utilitarian idea, utilitarian even in the best sense. God is a reality which even great modern physicists cannot and do not deny and which they approach without assertion or certitude but with the awe of enlightened thought. When we seek to know Him, we in our imperfect condition desire to know His form. But he is not like unto anything known which exists or anything that does not exist but which we figure to ourselves in our minds.

இலவசம் உள்ளதும்  
அல்லது அவல் உரு

Love Him whose form the like of which does not exist, either seen or conceived in thought. Infinite is that Good Entire. Embrace Him, ye men, giving up attachment that pull you down.

The worship of God is an elemental necessity of life as it has evolved in man and his mind. It is on a par with the urge for the preservation of life and urge for the maintenance of the race, like hunger and thirst and the urge of sex. It is a fundamental of existence and survival, not what can be questioned on the basis of use and utility. Man's survival calls for detachment and therefore for God.

(Courtesy: Ramakrishna Mission, Madras)

## Philosophy of Zen Buddhism

Translations from Zen Scriptures, by Sri Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki

### On Absolute Nothingness

*Excerpts from the "Lankavatara Sutra"*

Those who, afraid of sufferings arising from the discrimination of birth and death, seek for Nirvana, do not know that birth and death and Nirvana are not to be separated the one from the other, and, seeing that all things subject to discrimination have no reality, imagine that Nirvana consists in the further annihilation of the senses and their fields. They are not aware of the fact that Nirvana is the superior wisdom where a revolution takes place by self-realization. Therefore, those who are stupid talk of the trinity of vehicles and not of the state of mind only where there are no shadows. Therefore, those who do not understand the teachings of the Tathagatas of the past, present, and future,

concerning the external world, which is of mind itself, cling to the notion that there is a world outside what is seen of the mind, and go on rolling themselves along the wheel of birth and death.

Further, according to the teachings of the Tathagatas of the past, present, and future, all things are unborn. Why? Because they have no reality, being manifestation of mind itself, and as they are not born of being and non-being, they are unborn. All things are like the horns of the hare, horse, donkey, or camel, but the ignorant and the simple-minded who are given up to their false and erroneous imaginations, discriminate things which they are not; therefore all things are unborn.

Since the ignorant and the simple minded, not knowing that the world is what is seen of mind itself, cling to the multitudinousness of external objects, cling to the notions of being and non-being, oneness and otherness, bothness and not-bothness, existence and non-existence, eternity and non-eternity, as having the character of self-substance, which idea rises from discrimination based on habit-energy, they are addicted to false-imaginings. It is like a mirage in which the springs are seen as if they were real.....

In the same way, the ignorant and the

simple-minded with their minds impressed by various erroneous speculations and discriminations since beginningless time, with their minds burning with the fire of greed, anger and folly, delighted in a world of multitudinous forms, with their thoughts saturated with the ideas of birth, destruction, and subsistence, not understanding well what is meant by existent and non-existent, by inner and outer, the ignorant and the simple minded fall into the way of grasping at oneness and otherness, being and non-being, as realities... .

## The Perfect Way

From "Shinjin-no-mei," by Seng-t'san

This is the disease of the mind .....  
The Way is perfect like unto vast space,  
With nothing wanting, nothing superfluous  
It is indeed due to making choice  
That its suchness is lost sight of

Pursue not the outer entanglements,  
Dwell not in the inner void,  
Be serene in the oneness of things,  
And dualism vanishes by itself.

When we return to the root, we gain the meaning.

When we pursue external objects, we lose  
the reason.  
The moment we are enlightened within,  
We go beyond the voidness of a world  
confronting us.

The object is an object for the subject,  
The subject is a subject for the object  
Know that the relativity of the two  
Rests ultimately on one emptiness . . .

Clinging is never kept within bounds,  
It is sure to go the wrong way,  
Quit it, and things follow their own  
courses,  
While the essence neither departs nor  
abides....

The ignorant cherish the idea of rest and  
unrest,  
The enlightened have no likes and dislikes -  
All forms of dualism  
Are contrived by the ignorant themselves  
They see like unto visions and flowers  
in the sun.  
Why should we trouble ourselves to take  
hold of them ?

On The Ultimate

### *From Hui-Neng's "Tan-Ching"*

If you are desirous for the truly immovable,  
The immovable is in the moving itself.....  
A conscious being alone understands  
What is meant by "moving"—  
To those not endowed with consciousness  
The moving is unintelligible.....  
There is no seed of Buddhahood,  
Where there is no consciousness.....

(Courtesy : The Eastern Buddhist Society,  
Kyoto, Japan)

## Self-Discipline of the Zen Monks

The ascetic self-discipline practised by the Japanese Buddhist monks of the Zen sect is probably more severe than even that of the Trappist or the Cistercians of the Roman Catholic order. The practice of self-control leading to the complete effacement of self is something which appeals strongly to the Japanese, whose home and school training is such as to demand the sinking of the individual for the good of the community, as well as the complete subjugation of the emotions as the apogee of education.

From olden times, this self-discipline has been a training inseparable from Buddhism, and as Buddhism is the second most powerful religion in Japan, it is natural to find that special attention is paid to the development of the soul-consciousness through the subjugation of the physical and mental modifications. The sect in Japanese Buddhism which caters especially for this training is the Zen.

The Zen monasteries accept novitiates quite young. This is imperative, since only the young, hardy and yet submissive can possibly stand the strain of their rigorous ascetic training, and the docile

enthusiast is the only one likely to find it possible to train oneself to accept the hardships that Zen imposes.

The whole idea of Zen is to "rise above oneself!" It is by this that Zen claims one may open the mind's eye to see into the Ultimates. As proved by the results and the study of life, Zen claims to have solved what true life really is, and what is required for the complete living of life and full play of the soul. And what does it demand?

Long hours of meditation are insisted upon, and there is no room for excuse. So much does Zen insist upon this that there is a monitor appointed to watch over the meditating novitiates as per the direction of the abbot of a monastery. No failure is allowed to go without punishment. Self-reliance is taught by hard work. The luxuries of life are not provided. Wants are reduced to the minimum. Only bare necessities are conceded. Meals are vegetarian, frugal in quantity and severely simple in quality. Sleep and rest are also restricted. Very little contact with the outside world is permitted.

The supreme aim of Zen is to triumph over the lower self, over the world of

materal values. Thus Zen demands the most ardent spiritual training and expertise. Zen monks, in Japan, are considered among the land's spiritual and

ascetic elite, as rightly they should be, hot they ignore this honour and aspire only for a spiritual reward, that of Nirvana.

## Some Principles of the Philosophy of Pythagoras

Dr. John H. Manas, Ph.D.

(President, Pythagorean Society, New York)

We know that spirit and matter are potentially equal and that they come from the same one eternal source and principle; the first being spiritualized matter and the second being crystalized spirit.

In order to know about something, we must be conscious of that particular thing on and through as many planes and aspects of its existence as possible. This is the only way and the only process along the evolution of the universe to acquire personal experience of all things that surround us.

We know when we see an apple and we are conscious that it is an apple through our past experiences getting in contact with different apples through our five senses. We know about the shape, the weight, the flavour, the colour and all the other qualities of an apple because in our life we have seen, desired, smelled touched and eaten an apple.

God and Man

In the case of a strong man, he becomes conscious of his strength only through its application outwardly on the mental, emotional, vital and, finally, on the physical plane, by forming the thought, for instance, to lift a weight and having thought by the corresponding desire and then trying through his will, on the physical plane of his body, to lift the weight. Through this practice, the strength of the athlete becomes greater and greater everyday, depending upon the degree of consciousness of himself as the degree of strength

in him is concerned. This is the natural and invariable law of developing any quality in us and vice versa—to make active qualities in us dormant and latent by inactivity, or by being unconscious of them.

God and Universe

Through numberless rounds and cycles of the Divine Spirit, the causeless one, the original cause of all that is, along the creation of stellar systems, accompanied by the modad, or the individual human soul, God perpetuates Himself. Therefore, there is no end to creation and God is Eternal. This forms one of the greatest mysteries concerning the existence of God and the Eternity of this Universe. The more man becomes conscious of this truth in the mystery of creation, the more he knows of himself and of God.

Spirit and Matter

According to the Pythagorean philosophy, Cosmic Creation is the manifestation of an Eternal Dual Principle, Spirit and Matter. Looking at the sky at night, one is impressed by the countless heavenly bodies. All these suns, planets and satellites are composed of the physical matter of the same elements that form our sun, and our planets including the earth. They all move along a mysterious path in a set order. The same phenomenon of active life and order is also observed by looking at any substance through a powerful microscope. This visible motion is nothing else than the phenomenon of so invisible

Cosmic Force acting upon visible matter. This mysterious Living Energy which fills all that exists is the Spirit of God, which by acting upon Cosmic Matter brings forth Creation.

Matter cannot be destroyed. Its characteristics are inertia, disintegration and transformation. Matter is subject to countless changes in the physical forms which it helps to make. Therefore, although matter in itself is eternal, all physical forms or bodies are finite and transitory.

Spirit as a Cosmic Living Force is higher than matter and since matter is eternal, Spirit must also be eternal and co-existent with matter. Spirit is changeless, because if it were subject to change, it would have a beginning, and thus it could not be eternal, which is not true as we have already seen. Since this Cosmic Living Force or Spirit is not subject to change and it is eternal, it must necessarily be also immortal, in cont-

rast to all physical forms, which as being subject to change, are mortal. This Cosmic Life Force or Spirit, although always the same in itself, in its qualities and potentialities, manifests itself in countless different ways according to the degree of the development of matter, or of physical forms which it manifests.

This Living Cosmic Force or Spirit is intelligent to the utmost degree, Omnipresent, Almighty, Omniscient, with no beginning and with no end. It is eternal, immortal, the One, Original Cause of all that is, the Nameless One. Man, in the inadequacy of his language and in his finite conception, calls this God. The physical, visible substance through which this spirit of God manifests man calls Matter. And according to Plato "As our body is a part of the Universe, our soul is a part of the Soul of the Universe," we reach to the logical conclusion that although the physical body of man is mortal, his soul is Immortal and Divine.

## Stray Thoughts on Some Pauranic Episodes

Prof. Jean Herbert

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(Text of a Speech delivered at the Yoge-Vedanta Forest University in March 1956)

Maharaj, and Friends,

With your permission I would like to tell you in a few words how I approach a Pauranic story,\* a narrative, which I believe, everyone in India knows and which is spoken about so often. It relates to the life-story of Sri Krishna, a subject to which I have been devoting considerable study over a fairly long period—on the episodes relating to the life of Sri Krishna, particularly of his early life. His Govardhan Lila, Vrindavan Lila, and Mathura Lila are known to many and are told over and over again and many do

endeavour to get out of them spiritual help and guidance.

In the West people think that they are just nice stories, poetical in some places, but not with any sense or significance, at least not practical significance. But I have come to think that such is not the case and these stories are full of a very deep, precise and practical teaching, and I shall just tell you one or two instances. However, first I should say that to my mind, sufficient attention has not been paid so far to the various commentaries which

\* Please also see pp. 138 and 139 of the June, 1956, issue of *The Divine Life*.

high up in the air. Now child Krishna allows himself to be lifted up in this way as high as he (the Asura) could lift him, end, then there comes a time when the Asura can no longer lift him any higher and feels the weight, the ever-growing weight, of the child that he is carrying, and finally he has to collapse and child Krishna finds himself again safe and ready to go on with his work.

This bringing up of the child Krishna is exactly what the educator does. The educators,—and by that I mean both the parents and the teachers and the elder friends and brothers and those who have something to teach us,—do bring us up as high as they can, and the child Krishna shows us how we should take advantage of all that and accept to be brought up by the educators around us, but then there comes a time when, they have nothing more to give us and if we want to start on the path of our Sadhana, then we take responsibility on ourselves and with all the profit that we have got from the education that we have received, we should start on our own responsibility and go ahead with our own unaided efforts. And I believe that if you study very carefully the story of the Trinavartis episode, you will find probably very detailed instruction as to the way in which we should, in spiritual life, take full advantage of all the teachings and education that we can possibly get, but not allow ourselves to be destroyed by them, but rather come to the stage when we must progress further, as I said, on our own efforts.

#### Krishna Becomes 'Gopala'

These three episodes, to my mind, describe the obstacles which we have to overcome, not because things are bad in themselves, but because they put hindrances in our way at a certain stage,—the

obstacles that we have to overcome before we can enter into Sadhana,—and at that time when Sri Krishna has overcome those obstacles he can be put in charge of the cows, that is to say, of the very young entities which are described by the Sanskrit word 'Go,' which, as you know, also means rays of light, rays of the Sun, and, still more so, rays of spiritual illumination. That is to say, after he has overcome all those preliminary obstacles, he can tend those budding spiritual entities and this is the lesson that the Sadhak has to learn.

I will not go into all episodes, for that will take me very long. But just to indicate the importance of the connection between the episodes, I will cite two more.

#### Kalia Episode

The first one, which is very often mentioned, is the Kalias episode, how Sri Krishnas trampled upon the head of the big, seven-hooded serpent which was lying in the Jumna and which was so venomous that even the people and animals who came near the shore of the river, near him, fell down dead or almost dead. Now, Sri Krishnas got on the tree and jumped over the head of the serpent and finally the serpent had to make submission and then something very strange happened. Kalia had taken refuge in the Jumna to be saved from the attacks of Garuda. Sri Krishna does not kill him at all, he consigns him to the southern seas under the care of Garuda, who will now, instead of destroying him, protect him.

There is in that episode one thing which has struck me more than all the rest, and this is, as you will probably remember, when under the feet of the Lord, Kalia vomits black poison, and when Sri Krishna reproaches him for doing so, he replies, "I can only give you what you have given me. What you have put into me was poison,

and what I can offer you is what you have put into me." Well, this is a reply which goes very, very deep, over which I have thought many a time and for a long time, because as far as I can see, this is the most perfect example of submission to the Divine,—acceptance of whatever the Divine has given us, and offering to the Divine indiscriminately all that the Divine has given to us. This is the most perfect example I have ever seen or heard about absolute, unconditional and unqualified surrender to the Divine Will.

#### Identification With Divine Will

Now, what happens after that? Well, immediately after that incident, Sri Krishna and Baladeva and the Gopas fall asleep on the very bank of the Jumna and a very few hours afterwards, Agni comes in (the forest fire), and I think, this is one of the very few cases, and perhaps the only case, in which Srimad Bhagavata stresses the immediate sequence of two episodes, in which it is said that only a few hours after one episode the next one took place. If the Srimad Bhagavata devotee a few words to say so, it must be important.

What can be the meaning of that forest fire? Well, this evidently is the intervention of Agni. Many interpretations can be given to Agni and his actions. But one which I like best is the one given by Sri Aurobindo, that God Agni represents the power and consciousness of the Divine Will. Immediately after perfect submission to the Divine Will, the Divine Will, in the shape of Agni, comes in, there must be some reason for it, and what does Sri Krishna do with the forest fire? He does not put it out. He drinks it in. He swallows it. Well, if you drink in the power of Divine Will after such perfect submission to the Divine Will, it surely means that it is a practical way in Sadhana or I may say, of identifying yourself with the Divine

Will, of having no longer any will of your own, but of accepting and acting and fulfilling the Will of the Divine, which is a highly important step in Sadhana.

#### Vastrapaharana Episode

Another allegory, and that is an episode about which Indians do not like to speak, because they are afraid that they may be either ridiculed or thought immoral and that is what is called the Vastrapaharana—an episode in which the Gopis bathe in the Kalindi, and Krishna steals their clothes, climbs up a tree with the clothes and tells them that if they want to get back their clothes they should come naked and finally when they came out of the water, hiding their sexual parts, Krishna says "No You must come absolutely naked, holding absolutely nothing of your body," which they finally agreed to do.

Now, to my mind this is an extraordinarily important and interesting allegory. Of course as it has been said by everybody before, you must hide nothing from the Divine and your submission must be total, and all that is so you must be laid open to the Divine action. But I think, we can go very much further.

#### Transcending Above Duality

The Gopis have been practising for one month the Kshayanti Vrata, wishing to have Sri Krishna as their husband. They had also been performing Pujas to Durga, and after that they bathe in the Kalindi. Now, it is stated that they bathe in the Kalindi, just as the celestial beings bathe in Siva's Paradise, called 'Surasundi'. 'Surasundi' etymologically means 'Sura and Asura'; the distinction between Sura and Asura is the very first pair of opposites, the very first duality that comes when the world is created. The Surasundi, especially in the Paradise of Siva the Lord of Oneness, certainly corresponds to a stage of consciousness where you no longer experience

that duality between 'Sura and Asura, between God and demons, when you rise above the duality of God and Jiva, and therefore, above all dualities which are more or less resultant from it.

Now Gopis bathe in the Kali ndi as celestials do in the Surasuri. To bathe in the water, which has no name nor shape, which is beyond Namâ and Rupa, which we find at the beginning of creation, very probably represents, as I believe Vallabhacharya himself has said, a plunge into the Brahmic Consciousness, into the consciousness of oneness, or Nirvikalpa Samadhi, the consciousness where all the duality has disappeared, where you are one with the Absolute, and it is only natural that after all these Pujas and Vratas the Gopis should enjoy the consciousness of the Absolute.

Now, they are called 'nnt of that river in which they are plunged, by the sound of the laughter of Krishna in the tree,—that call to joy cannot be described by anything than laughter. At first they reason it and refuse to come out, as people who are in the consciousness of the Absolute do not want to come out. They feel that they have reached the highest, and coming out is a fall. Finally, they decide to come out and answer the call of personal God, Sri Krishna. But still there is one thing which they do not like to do. That is to show their sex. In the Brahmic consciousness there is no sex, there is no duality, and sex is the first duality in man, and they refuse to give up the duality of sex, and finally they have to give in and they expose all their material body to the light of the Divine.

#### Spiritualization of Physical Consciousness

All Sadhaks know that it is the most difficult thing to do. It is comparatively easy to surrender our mind and thoughts to the Divine. It is less easy, but still it is

not an impossible to surrender our emotions, our feelings, to the Divine. But to let the Divine Light come right into our physical body, our material consciousness, and in every nook and corner of it, is the most difficult thing in Sadhana and there are so many among Sadhaks who have succeeded in spiritualizing their feelings, but who have not succeeded in spiritualizing their body.

This is the very last recess into which spiritualization comes in, and it is immediately after that that Sri Krishna can promise that he can dance with them the Rasa Lila, which would not have been possible before that total surrender in the Vastrapaharana, and this to me, is very important, because I think many people wish to see Rasa Lila, because they like to see Rasa Lila, thinking that they will, by seeing the Rasa Lila, get to the Rasa Lila stage, but they ignore the pre-requisites, the Vastrapaharana, of bringing down the Divine Consciousness right into the physical body, which is an essential pre-requisite before the Rasa Lila can be enjoyed, and I believe, here we have every detailed technique of it.

#### Significance of Some Other Episodes

There is one curious thing about the episodes of Vastrapaharana and Rasa Lila. Since Krishna has agreed to dance with the Gopis in Rasa Lila, he might do it at once. But He does not. He takes nearly one year before he finally fulfills his promise and that is very strange, because quite a few things happened in the meantime. First of all there is the episode of the Mathura Brahmics. They were performing the sacrifices, when Krishna sent the Gopas there for food. They were so busy with their sacrifices that they could not pay attention to the Gopas, and then they understood the importance of the message and they came forward with

food. After that there is the Govardhana episode,—when Nanda Gopas wants to perform a great sacrifice to Indra, and Krishna explains to Nanda and Gopas that this is not the proper way to do, and that there is no sacrifice to be offered to Indra, and he lifts the Govardhana mountain to protect them against the vengeance of Indra—and the episode of Nanda being taken by Varuna as a prisoner and having to be liberated by Lord Krishna.

All these seem to be funny stories, but there is one striking thing. All these three episodes take place between the time Krishna promises to take part in the Rasa Lila and the actual time he takes part in it. When Angiras comes to Indra, it is Nanda who insists on worshipping Indra, and it is again Nanda who has to be freed from the clutches of Varuna. One may interpret these three episodes in this way:

Even after one has become personally fit to enjoy the Rasa Lila with one's own spiritual development there are still some obstacles which have to be overcome outside, some outside obstacles, those which are connected with ancestors, parents, etc. One of them is the belief that all that ancestors did was perfect and must be followed out of respect for them, and that is the Angiras sacrifice. Another is the deepest belief in the omnipotent, or rather, the supremacy, I should say, of the mind of the higher mind, which is represented by Indra, and that everything must be put below, put under a lower level than the reverence which we pay to the higher mind. And the other one, Varna as you know, in the Vedas, represents the omnipotent, omnipresent ethical ruler, who is with us wherever we are who knows what we all do, who judges us according to our merit. That is, belief in the ethical ruler, which is also inherited from our ancestors. These three

beliefs, i.e., the ancestral pressure on us, should be overcome even after we have individually become fit for Rasa Lila, and this is a satisfactory explanation why Sri Krishna had to wait for one year even after the Vastraharana episode before He could dance with the Gopis.

#### - Importance of Symbols

I have given these as some indication of the ways in which, I think, we may derive from the Pauranic episodes much more practical instruction than we generally do. Even down to the minutest details of Sadhaos, both in the study of each individual episode and in their order and sequence, and also in all the particular words which are used to describe them in the great scriptures, each one of the words has, I believe, a very definite and important significance. I very much hope that many people in India will work on those lines, will study along those lines, the scriptures with which they are familiar and derive from them much practical and detailed teaching which they can give to us who are beginners in the study of scriptures, and I hope very much, however wrong my interpretation may be, it is important, I believe to work on those lines and to seek on those lines, if we want to have a very detailed technique in Sadhana which we think more important, and the importance of which is being recognized more and more, not only in India, but also in the West.

And this is a particularly well suited place (Sivanandashram, Rishikesh) for that research, as you have the immense privilege of being under the guidance of a very great living saint, who can give you all the inspiration, strength and guidance, which you need in order to extract from the scriptures all the valuable truths which they contain and all of which are not commonly brought out. If you will do so, you will certainly render your countrymen and people a great service.

# A Brief Survey of the Religious History of Andhra

Dr. K.C. Varadachari, Ph.D.

Religion is native to the human mind. In some form or other it has exercised profound influence on the course of human history. Its forms are many but its direction and progress have been steady. We may agree to trace it with the socio-anthropologist to a primitive state of mythical and mysterious religion of the tribe from which stemmed out all kinds of cultural activities. Supernatural religion yielded place to the natural religion of reason. Tribal religious and mythical culture was replaced by the religion of the human mind or reason. Philosophic religion sought to discover order and cause in the world and gradually philosophy became man's increasing concern.

Today the sceptical spirit of enquiry is replacing philosophy by science, and the findings of science are accepted by philosophy as its premises and presuppositions. The tribal religion gave place to customary religion, and this in turn to philosophic religion and personal experience. The evolution of religion embraces in a sense all life though we may distinguish between the several stages of our institutions also. The tribal institutions in respect of family, race, state-organization or social authority have passed through stages till finally they are being incorporated in the present social context. But this social context is an ever-changing thing.

## Isolation is Undesirable

The world's civilizations and cultures, being varied according to geographical and economic conditions, have never been for long permitted to grow up in isolation. Isolation is the most unreal thing in the universe. Ignorance of the existence of others has helped the isolationist policies but science has been the greatest breaker

of ignorance and the walls of isolationist institutions have been removed.

Thus institutions from the biggest to the smallest have been unable to remain static or maintain their status quo, and all that now remains is to adapt one's institutions to the pressing needs. This adaptation has however been so very constant and continuous that it has been somewhat of a myth to speak of an unchanging tradition. The intentions of the original institutions, conscious or unconscious, have played a guiding role, preserving the thread of continuity amidst all the changes, some of them very drastic and revolutionary and some of them rather trivial but necessary.

## Catholic Spirit in Hinduism

Hindu Cultural tradition is also its culture and heritage. There have been certain earlier primitive cultural groups, as in the Aryan Area, and somewhat spread at several centres which have been undergoing a certain amount of absorption and integration whilst a portion of them has almost led a kind of suicidal isolation due to its unwillingness or incapacity for adaptation. Hindu religious and philosophic spirit, by and large, had made their integration possible, and gradually their cultural practices have been admitted to be performed by them, even after absorption. This is one of the reasons why Hindu religion, being tolerant and catholic, has been able to give freedom of religious practice and even discovered deeper significance, whilst insisting on the religious spirit in all practices. The acceptance of sacrifice even whilst spiritualizing its purpose and manner has finally made sacrifice a mystic symbolic

act rather than an act of killing and cruelty.

### Three Aspects

This shows how Hindu religion developed three aspects, namely the physical and material aspect (Bhautika) the psychological aspect (Adhyatmika) and the spiritual (divine or Deiva) aspect. All progress is had by the intersection of the three. Physical changes could be made safely only when the psychological and spiritual truths are steadily pursued. Traditional religion in India, being spiritual and psychological, has been able to make the physical adaptations to all and every type of condition safely and without imperilling itself. Even psychological religions (of the heart) have not been able to shake the spiritual basis of the accepted traditional religious thought which enfolds all life.

What has been the historical tradition in Andhra in respect of religion? The earliest references to Andhra go back to the period of the Mahabharata. There is no doubt that Andhra came under the Aryan influence, for the Ramayana does speak of this Dakshinapatha and the regions of the Godavari. But it is not clear whether the Eastern coastal zone was well known as contrasted with the Western route down the Vindhya.

### Advent of Buddhism in Andhra

Our knowledge of the period after Buddha, is more clear. Andhra was indeed a very important centre of Buddhist religious life. The Achaean Empire extended up to Nellore in the South. The religious monasteries were strewn all over Andhra. The most important seats have been Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda. There have been about 27 Buddhist Tirthas in Andhra Desa right from Chikakole in the North down to Ongole, and the rock edicts of Asoka have been found in Gooty.

The most important however among them had been situated on the banks of Krishna and a few on the Godavari. The story of this period has been, of course, well dealt with by scholars of Indian History.

The decadence of this Buddhist period of roughly 1000 years of which the later 400 years have been the period of schools of Buddhism in Andhra, is clearly referable to the failure of pure moral religious thought to sustain itself even by means of the philosophical, idealistic and sceptical arguments of Yogasara and Madhyamika variety. Scepticism is a good servant but a bad master. No one really can be satisfied with intellectual optimism, for it does not satisfy the heart. Even eighteenth century reality is better than philosophical nihilism. Even the disciples of Buddhism (not Buddha) degenerated into intellectual gymnasts on the one side and on the other libertines to morals.

### Decline of Buddhism

As Buddha long ago warned the admission of women into Buddhism as Bhikkus (Swamis) led to predicted and strange results when Mahayana Buddhism began to make head-way. Tantricism or the practice of symbolic rites, the creation of a pantheon of Buddhas, and the acceptance of Saktis (consorts) of these Buddhas and their hierarchy brought in their train some of the most reprehensible practices. With the passing of the Pure Hinayana (or the Ethical Buddhism of the Buddha) passed away the cult of the Buddha from Andhra. Though gradual, its passing out of Andhra and ultimately from India has been dictated by the inner spirituality of Hindutva.

Buddhism, it has been recently shown, was a brave and bold attempt to purify Hinduism, and though it succeeded in this very well, it developed its own weaknesses quite alien to it in a sense, and had

to be forced out. Hinduism asserted itself in Andhra (as in every other part of India), through a return to the traditional form enunciated by the Veda and the Upanishads, without the glaring defects of sacrificial mysticism against which alone Buddhism protested. Further the extreme nihilism of Buddhism was replaced by a fundamental faith in the living 'realizable' God; the Absolute Spirit or Brahman. The first development was the growth of the Bhagavata Religion, a revival of the Vaudeva Cult and the greater and greater study of the epics and the Puranas.

#### Pauranic influence

The age of the Puroses has been decidedly the age of the decline of Buddhism. In the South we find that this period is the period of the rise of the Tamilian mystics and they belonged to the two major sects of Veishnava and Saita. United in their opposition to no-Vedic religions, though differing from each other, they spread the spirit of Bhakti or God-love to all, without difference of Varas or Ashrams, and taught that it is through Bhakti and Prapatti alone that salvation could be got, Samsara could be crossed and bliss everlasting gained. The Buddhists and the Jains, not having anything to offer except extinction, tried to get their new gods accepted, but they had neither reason nor tradition to buttress them up, and they ignominiously failed to attract and retain whatever loyalties the original religions demanded and got.

#### Buddhist Archeological Traces

Historically Buddhists did encourage and improve the language of Telugu. "The period of Satavahana rule in the Deccan (about 225 B.C.-225 A.D.) witnessed the growth of commercial and colonial intercourse and the development of Buddhism and Buddhist Art. Nowhere

can be seen today such a large number of ancient Buddhist foundations as in Andhra. They are the relics of a culture which has gone to make up Andhra civilization. All the earlier culture of the Deccan came to a definite shape under Buddhist stimulus out of which emerged the new Brahmanical culture of the Post-Satavahana Period. The third century A.D. was thus the culmination of one epoch and the beginning of another in political and cultural history." (Buddhist Remains in Andhra, p 8, by Dr. K.R. Subramanian).

#### Revival of Brahminism

The Pallavas (225-340 A.D.) were a Telugu power. They gave a great impetus to Brahmanism. They ruled from Kauchi and their territory extended to Krishna. The revival of Brahmanism included the performances of sacrifices as detailed in the Brahmanas. The worship of Narayana was established in temples. The names of the Kings such as Sivaskanda, Vishnugopa, Kumaravishnu, show the trend towards Brahmanism and it is perhaps a period when Buddhism was not yet completely out of the picture, as there is a name of Budhavarman as one of the most brilliant kings of this period among the Pallavas. He was the son of Kumaravishnu.

The Ikshvakus and Salankayanas (275-450 A.D.) also ruled during this period and there is no doubt that as the names suggest they were anxious to trace their lineage to the Vedic Rishis like Vasishtha and Salankayana. As Dr. Subramanian puts it, "Within the small ambit of territory delimited by the kings of Kalinga north of the Godavari, by the Pallavas South of the Krishna and the Kadamba-Vakatakas war-zone on the west, the Salankayanas ruled with the proud and great title of Maharaaja, accelerating the revival of Brahmanism and the resuscitation of Sanskrit language and literature." (p 93)

The author further proceeds to show that "the threads of their policy were taken up by the Vishnukundins" and the "Andhradeesa is thus slowly lost to Buddhism with which her culture is saturated," and the Kadambas, the Gangas and the Pallavas of the South come within the sphere of the Gupta religious and cultural sway.

The cult of the sacrifices was revived. Purvamimamsa was practised. The Hindu temples began to assume more and more importance and rulers gave grants to them. Patronizing of Hindu temples and practices was the order of the day. The way was prepared for the onrush of Kumarila Bhatta and Sankaracharya and the Bhakti schools which finally tolled the death-knell of Buddhism and Jainism which had by this time degenerated having lost all vitality, ethical and spiritual, in Andhradeesa.

#### Age of Ecclesiastical Eminence

Thus a thousand years passed under the revived Bhakti and Jnana and Karma Yogas of Hindu thought. It was the period of our wonderful literary activity. Cultural revival and spiritual exaltation went together with the founding of the Hindu dynasties. But it must be confessed as Andhra was sandwiched between the North and the South, it became the meeting place of cultures. The Mahabharata was translated, so also the Puranas and the Ramayana. All literary creative powers and sculptural and artistic talent were utilized for the purpose of spiritual regeneration. Indeed, it is even conceded that it is Andhra that influenced wonderfully the South-East Asian cultural development and the Hinduization of them is due to Andhra cultural enterprise.

Enthusiasm and emotional sincerity are verily the characteristics of Andhra ethos. Bhakti therefore became a passionate concern. Godliness and saintliness were the

goals of cultural life. Temples sprang up all over the country, replacing the monasteries and caves of the Buddhist monks. Buddhism had been the religion of recluses and monks, and though a religion of humanistic compassion, it did not show a way of participation of all in the Divine Adventure. Hindu revival centering round the temple and the sacrifice, art and culture became the concern of all. It is this that prompted granting place for the laymen of the society that made for the powerful universal liberation of cultural activity.

#### Realistic Approach

Instincts of man become holy not by disuse but by dedication to the higher end. The caste system, too, was revived but it did not seem to be so oppressive as the renunciation of all work and dedication, and did not make for meaninglessness of oneself to oneself and to all. It is necessary to understand that any revival is impossible unless the common men are willing to accept it. People gave up the Buddhist and Jaina ways of life and elected to go back to a more concrete and realistic approach to the religious life. The rulers only followed the wishes of the people. It is impossible on any other hypothesis to explain the complete disappearance of such an ethically noble humanistic religion. People were tired of nihilism and pessimism, and the spiritual genius of India returned to another method of integration of her spiritual adventure. This is the explanation of the rebirth of Hinduism. But it came as a decentralization of religious culture through temples in every village and a community growing round it in a dedicated spirit of spiritual liberation, co-operative, organic, cultural and ahle all with the sense of community in God.

Saiva and Vaishnava sects arose. Later on, the modified forms of Veera Saiva and

Aradhya cults as well as the Vaishnava cults of Sri Ramanuja, Madhva, Valsabha and Nimbarka and even Chaitanya in succession inspired the people of Andhra Centred round wonderful temples, but linked up with one another by the hymnists, the age of revelation returned for a while to the South vying with the ancient Vedic Mantra period. India was fused together by religious and cultural sentiments by these sons of God.

#### Impact of Islam

The Moslem invasions and occupation of Andhra brought in a new challenge from about the middle of the 14th century Hindu institutions and the temples (the soul of the village and the community) were again under strain. They suffered severely during the earlier period of Islamic fanaticism. Islam could not uproot wholly religious tradition. It could only displace some of the customs of the converted. Islam promised the actuality of equality which was but the promise of the equality in realization of Hinduism. The Islamic tradition brought into contact with the Vaishnava and Veera Saiva mysticism presented no large differences except in the type of worship and the name of the Godhead worshipped. Iconic worship is the major difference between Islam and Brahmanism as revived by Vaishnava and Saiva and the Tantric Agama and the Satsya Agama schools. The social differences were sought to be annulled by these evangelical sects. Andhra had the full experience of these religious and mystic forces. The great temples did produce some very great saints, Ramdas of Bhadrachalam, Anumacharya of Tirumalai, Tiruppatt, Pothana of Vontimitta, not to speak of Vallalha and Nimbarka and the great Acharyas of Vaishnavism who had propagated and preserved the ancient traditions of spiritual Bhakti movements.

#### 'Brahmoism'

The changes during the early part of the Nineteenth century regarding the ideal and types of education to be given to Indians, the great decision of some of the leading thinkers in Bengal like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, to adapt western modes of life and to adapt our religious tradition to the western standards as also to prevent certain abhorrent practices like 'Sati' and others, and bring about social reform by abolishing all that was distinguishable from western ways of life, provide the beginning of the modern period. The Religion of Brahmoism which was sponsored by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, was in fact a Christian version of Upanishadic teaching. The content was surely the Hindu theistic Upanishadic thought, but the form was adaptation of the Christian way. But it was a very attractive religion and the advanced minds of that period joined it. Andhra was also influenced by this religious and social movement and some of the most important personalities produced by this were the Raja of Pithapuram, Sir R Venkataratnam, J Venkatanarayana and others. English educational institutions were also founded and Brahmo Samajas were started everywhere.

#### Accelerated Socio-Religious Activities

A later development more suited to the gentry of Andhra was the Bhakti movement initiated by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. The social reform movements were also enthusiastically taken up by the Andhras. The Theosophical Movement was another in the religious influences which helped to modify the attitudes. The energetic co-operation of Andhras in the Gandhian Programme and political struggle is incomparably one of the bright chapters. All these various movements brought out the fact that the original form of the traditional religion must undergo

change. It is true that the spiritual and sentimental attachment to ancient culture was stronger than ever. The innumerable Ashrams, almost with a minimum of one Ashram for a district, the large number of Divine Life Societies and Theosophical Lodges and Samajas, show that there has happened a spontaneous urge for spiritual life on the part of the people. The questions that are of the greatest importance today are : Is religious spirit more widely prevalent or less widely prevalent today ? Are we attached more to the form or to the spirit ? What exactly is the content of our spirituality? Is it Vedic, Upanisadic, Buddhist, or Bhakti ? Is it even considered that the social frames of the earlier religious life are no longer needed, such as for instance, the family organization, institution of marriage or caste ? Are these the essentials of religion or not ?

#### Appraisal and Evaluation

So long the impacts have been purely religious or social ; whilst we admitted the social changes more or less, we did not change the religious traditional attitude. That was our substance of culture, a matter of spirit and the psyche rather than the physical. But then the challenge is not from the spiritual or religious or social patterns. it is from the changes in the environment initiated by industrialization and urbanization and the break up of the family unit by employment distribution.

The world has shrunk in space and time, and commercial life has involved us completely with the economies of other countries and nations. Our study of ourselves in every sphere is under the general check-up of comparison with the rest of the world. Isolated in a way, we had hardly compared ourselves with others, but now it seems almost impossible to miss comparing ourselves with others. This has led to appraisals and valuations. The industrial developments, though few at present, are going to be speeded up. The

duty of the modern citizen of Andhra is to find out what would be the consequences of these changes in the ways and modes of life on the family, marriage, employment, arts and crafts, initiative in religion and realization of basic freedoms, and so on, including such important problems as heredity and culture, and other values.

#### Present State of Religious Belief

The present state of religious belief in Andhra is clearly to be gleaned from the social feeling and sentiment for religion in the countryside, and the spiritual feeling for culture in the urban population. This includes a consideration of the reactions of the different sections of the people, to the concepts of religion and industrial development and ancient modes of religious life. The reactions are diverse. There is no doubt that herculean efforts are being made to canalize the materialistic attitude, which has gripped the industrially-minded and the lower groups, into kruizing religious ideals.

The religion of the sanctuary and solitude and isolation is aught to be replaced by the religion of service and dedication. This has attracted a large body of people. The temples have been taken over by the Government for the proper administration of its conduct and it is remarkable that the number of pilgrims to these temples, which have been indeed a great experiment in decentralized religion, is increasingly great. Both the illiterate and the literate, the well-educated and trained professors and politicians and all, have left the influence of spirituality through temples. The rise in income of the temples such as that in Tirupati during the past ten years shows the phenomenal influence of temples. This is in sheer contrast with the claim that science has a tendency to minimize the influence of the temples.

#### Religion and Science

It is certainly clear that religion and science are not opposites except when science is unwilling to recognize that cer-

tain phenomena are beyond it and are not within its province, and when religion also concedes that scientific discoveries and technological developments and industrial expansion are capable of being yoked to human welfare and should be performed in the spirit of dedication to God's glory To industrialize production in such a way as not to lead to robotization of man, or to make man just a cog in the machine, though a well looked after cog but to make him realize the spiritual nature of all activity is the goal of the present-day Karma Yoga

Thus religion and industry could co-operate in the endeavour to realize more fully the spiritual meaning of all life. The new Bhakti Yoga is to worship God as the One Supreme Being taught in all religions and to recognize that God is in the temples no less than in the hearts of seekers and in all beings, high or low. Education which was devised for producing servants for colonial powers is now being adapted to our cultural conditions, and the restoration of cultural values in all directions to suit our traditional spirituality is engaging close attention. The distortion of ideas about our own culture requires to be rectified, for the application of western standards to weigh and test Indian cultural tradition has been found to be the one way to go wrong.

#### Integration of Values

The standards of the West which the earlier reformers adopted have been just the nineteenth century ones, and our knowledge of our own traditions had neither been full nor unbiased. Thanks to the improvement of our knowledge, it is possible to arrive at a proper appraisal of spiritual tradition and its institutions and shape our future not merely in a spirit of nationalism but in the context of world unity. The varied advice and attraction of material

prosperity, the glamour of scientific progress, operate in one direction, towards the adoption of the western concept of progress. In the meanwhile the West is suffering at least in the conscience of its leading lights a nostalgia for spiritual values.

An integration between secular prosperity through whatever means—India has chosen the socialistic path towards material prosperity and spiritual advancement—and ultimate trans-social values is the way out promised by its tradition. The message of Ashoka and Akbar, Ramanuja and Shankara is securely held in the conscience of the people of Andhra. The reformist mind has turned its work to creative endeavour. Tinkering with social forms without an organic conception of the *sha* and *pura*, this world and that beyond man and his Godhead or spiritual Soul, has hitherto been found out to be inappropriate. Scientific developments have entailed certain forms of social development in the West. It is necessary to see that we do not merely accept them as such and in the form that they come, for they have been found to be inappropriate even in those countries.

#### Enlightened Readaptation

To break away from tradition is neither easy nor desirable, we have always to reckon with fundamental psychological phenomena of statism and regression and pathological difficulties. Trees uprooted die, but man uprooted from tradition sniffler. Tradition is not static but a dynamic soul of the people. India has recovered again and again her soul through her tradition, even as our survey of Andhra's religious history, rather the religious history of the whole of India, shows. A more conscientious approach to our great tradition, an enlightened adaptation of that which is valuable in it to suit the scientific age and a definite faith that history has lessons to offer for the future course of action, are necessary.

# Existentialism

Prof. Edwin A. Boritt

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 [Text of a speech given at the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University]

There is an important trend in present-day Western philosophy—the trend which is referred to by the term existentialism. That word itself is being used in a peculiar way in this philosophy. I think perhaps the best way for me to expound what is vital in this point of view is to start with what will seem most obscure and proceed hopefully to a clarification and explanation of it which will at least not be obscure.

This trend of thought really goes back to a man who lived and wrote about a hundred years ago, Kierkegaard, a Danish theologian and philosopher. He was almost neglected by European thinkers of his generation and the generation after him, but, during the last fifty years his philosophy has been coming into limelight and is now one of the recognizedly powerful forces in the present century. There are at least four influential philosophers who are classified as existentialists—Heidegger, Jaspers, Sartre and Marcel.

K. Jaspers is now teaching in Switzerland, Gabriel Marcel is a Catholic philosopher while the novelist and dramatist Jean Paul Sartre is known in the literary world even more than among philosophers and is one of the outstanding influences in French literature and art.

### What is Existentialism?

I said I would start with what is most obscure so let me state right away what is the central maxim or doctrine of this existentialist movement, accepted by all these four important thinkers and by other existentialists even though they differ among themselves in many details of their philosophy. According to that doctrine "Existence precedes essence." I am sure

most of you will agree that if we left the matter simply with that statement, we would not have explained anything significant about existentialism. But the general meaning that is expressed in such a doctrine is this:

The word "essence" signifies for them pretty much what Aristotle's philosophy would have meant when Aristotle talked about the form of man as contrasted with a particular living human being—what modern biological science might call the law according to which man emerges and has the characteristics that his species possesses as compared with other living creatures. Now these thinkers are affirming that whatever can be said about the essence of man is very unimportant as compared with what needs to be said about the way each living individual human being must follow in order to solve the urgent problems that press upon him.

What we are really concerned about, or what philosophy should be concerned about, is not to understand the essence of man as an abstraction, but the existence of man as he lives it, from day to day, under the conditions that actually press upon him and especially under the emotional involvements that life brings to each man. Man finds himself thrown upon the shore of existence just by having been born, just by being here, just by struggling as we all are in one way or another to learn the lessons of life to find out how to adjust ourselves successfully to its demands. When the existentialist philosophers pronounced this maxim—"existence precedes essence"—what they really meant was that philosophy should be

thought and taught and written in the light of this circumstance

### Rational Optimism

Now the most important implication that this point of view has for Western philosophy and the main reason I suppose why even yet existentialism is not a powerful force in the field of academic philosophy except in the Latin countries is that, from this point of view, it is recognized that what philosophers have thought of as man's faculty of reason is not as omnipotent, not even as competent, as most philosophers in the past have taken for granted that it is. Ever since Plato the general tendency in Western thought has been to believe that man by the power of his reason can conquer his emotions, can render them subservient to his intelligence, can guide his life according to reason, can reach theoretical explanations of his world under the guidance of a free and rational curiosity. There have been exceptions here and there, of course, but the general tendency of philosophers has been to accept that rationalistic optimism as we might call it, as something that can be confidently assumed.

On the whole, the influence of modern science has been to encourage that confidence in reason. Modern science in the West has seemed to prove that by man's unaided power of reason he can come to understand the various branches of mathematics, he can investigate what is going on in the world around him, he can by the application of scientific method reach truths about the world of nature which are essentially sound. They may have to be corrected in the light of further scientific progress, but so far as the facts available at the time are concerned they are demonstrable truths. One way in which this confidence in reason has expressed itself in Western thought

is to say that man's unaided reason can reach results about whatever he may choose to study that are objective. By using this word 'objective' what is meant is not necessarily that these results are about external world rather than about man himself, what is meant is that they are such that they can be established to the satisfaction of any normal individual who is interested in them and becomes acquainted with the methods that are used in establishing those results. They do not reflect anything in the subjective nature of the thinking individual as an individual. That is what is meant by saying that reason can reach objective truths, by its own resources.

### Limitations of Reason

The implication of existentialism, in saying in its characteristic way that "existence precedes essence," is that reason is not capable of reaching objective truths except in a very few branches of knowledge, where it does seem possible to at least approximate very closely to the ideal of objective demonstrability, such as mathematics and the physical sciences. The existentialist asserts that as we deal with subjects that are farther and farther removed from the exactitude and definiteness of mathematics—especially when we deal with problems involving human relations involving society, involving choice between one value and another—we cannot attain objectivity. In this field objective truth is beyond us.

When Kierkegaard a hundred years ago pronounced as maxim that 'truth is subjectivity,' what he meant was to challenge this long dominant idea that reason is competent to establish objective truths by its own resources. He meant further that in dealing with problems that vitally affect human life such objectivity is not

only impossible but undesirable. What each individual, what each philosophical thinker should be trying to do, is to reach and clarify the truth that is true for him, in the sense that in and through it he finds his guidance towards solving the practical and emotional problems of life that press upon him as fundamental.

### Indian Philosophy and Existentialism

This leads me to interject that, so far as I understand philosophy as it is pursued in India Indian philosophy seems to have been in a very significant sense existential all the way through. In the history of philosophy in your country all problems have been characteristically approached in terms of their relationship to the vital practical problem of human life—the problem 'how to achieve the highest good' 'how to find the right way to realize the Self,' i.e., "the ultimate reality of each individual." In that fundamental sense your philosophy has always been in essential harmony with the central emphasis of contemporary existentialism in the West.

Now what I shall try to do in the rest of my exposition is to clarify existentialist thinking as it has in our day taken shape in the Western world. The best way to do this is to point out some of the factors in its background—in part the earlier background, in part the more recent background—which have led to its formulation and its influence in the position that it now occupies. In describing this background I shall be thinking especially of the irrationalism of the existential point of view that is, its readiness to challenge and set aside the rationalistic optimism characteristic of Western philosophy. That optimism, by the way, has had various peaks when its influence on the Western mind has been especially strong. One of those peaks came during the life time of

Kant and was vigorous particularly in the European continent; it was the period subsequently known as the 'enlightenment,' by which word is meant a pervading confidence in reason as capable of obtaining truth and of guiding man practically towards happiness and well-being. Another peak was reached a generation ago, when a similar rationalistic confidence pervaded almost all aspects of Western thinking but specially in the social political and economic fields. As I shall show a little later on, one of the factors encouraging the existentialist movement right now is the decline in that optimism which has come about largely because of military and political forces during the last generation.

### Challenge to Confidence in Reason

However, even during the earlier period of philosophical thinking in the West, there were positions championed by some important thinkers which implied that this rationalistic optimism was not as well grounded as most philosophers thought it to be. There was of course for one thing the mystic current in Western thought—never a very dominant influence, but still an influence that was there. Plotinus was one of these few thinkers in the West who have insisted that attainment of the Ultimate Truth about the universe and oneself requires a transcendence of reason, in the form of a mystic ecstasy which cannot be rationally comprehended or explained. That is one factor which right through the history of Western philosophy has been something of a challenge to the confidence in reason that on the whole has been characteristic of Western thought.

Then another challenge to it came from the field of Protestant theology. In fact it goes back earlier than the systematic Protestant theologians—at least as far back

as St Augustine St Augustine, and the later theologians who have followed Luther and Calvin, believed that man's reason is not the dominant faculty in his nature, the dominant faculty is will, which can be either obedient to God or in rebellion against God. According to this current theological thinking as long as man's will is disobedient to God's, his reason will not be capable of attaining truth it will be corrupted by sin just as everything else in his nature will be corrupted by sin. It will reach results on whatever it is studying which reflect the passions and desires and self-justifications of the individual who is using his reason. Only when man's will has been transformed so that it has become submissively obedient to God, can his reason then hopefully pursue in the limited areas that are open to it the truths that it naturally seeks. This position, you see, involves the belief that reason by itself is not a dependable guide to truth, but that it is subordinate in man's nature to this other faculty of will and can function properly only when that will has been transformed by divine grace.

#### Recent Trends in Subjectivism

During the latter part of the 19th century there were several outstanding thinkers, now recognized as more important than they seemed to be at the time when they lived, who also interjected a note that ran counter to this optimistic confidence in reason. There was Friedrich Nietzsche who in his rather pungent aphorisms expressed the idea that the philosophers who think that they are pursuing objective truth are merely rationalizing their own wishes and desires. Indeed he hinted more than once, they are really being moved, in their own peculiar way, by a will to power rather than the will to truth that they thought they were expressing.

\* There was Karl Marx who has since his day become such a powerful philosophic force behind the communist movement and the theories it employs. Marx insisted that what look on the surface to be propositions satisfying objective curiosity about the world, about history, about religion, in fact about any subject except natural science, are really disguised justifications of the prestige and position of the economic class that the thinker asserting them belongs to.

There was Sigmund Freud the founder of modern psychology. He taught the idea (and confirmed it by a vast amount of clinical evidence derived from the field of psychiatry) that many of the forces that lead people to believe what they accept as true are unconscious forces operating below the level of conscious reasoning and reflection, but which are none the less potent in determining what individuals believe.

A little latter, as we come towards the turn of the 19th century into the 20th, the science of anthropology became a significant force. Anthropologists began at this time to study, more impartially than they had done before, the beliefs that are characteristic of other cultures than the culture of Western Europe, and especially the ideas found in various primitive societies. The conclusion their investigations naturally led to was that what seems to be a rationally justified truth to one culture is on the whole nothing but a reflection of the ways of thinking that the people in that culture have come to adopt, as a result of the historical forces that have been impinging upon them and the general presuppositions that they take for granted. Now such ways of thinking differ more or less radically, from one culture to another and no one can say that any particular set of such presuppositions is

absolutely true. Human thinking, in other words, instead of reflecting a truly impartial curiosity and reaching objective results, is the product of whatever non-rational forces are shaping the culture of the thinkers involved.

### Impelling Factors

These forces had in the minds of certain groups weakened the rationalistic optimism that in general has characterized Western thinking; but until the present generation they had been beliefs of particular schools, none of which was very powerful. Now they have converged together in this existentialist movement and have through this convergence become one of the major factors in Western thinking of the present time.

But the fact that this change has come about is due not merely to the intellectual factors that I have just been describing. It is due also to the political and historical forces that have been operating in the Western world in our day, especially since the close of the first world war. I remarked earlier that this rationalistic confidence that has been characteristic of the Western mind reached one of its peaks of influence about a generation ago. I meant by that remark the fact that at the end of the first world war there was a surge of hope and expectation that the democratic ideal that had triumphed, and had made itself the dominant political force in western Europe and throughout the world was going to continue to be effective. There was a strong belief that man was going to progress everywhere in the world towards happiness and prosperity under the guidance of that democratic ideal, and especially under the programmes of democratic education.

We in the U.S.A. have been confident ever since the founding of our country that education in our primary schools,

secondary schools and colleges, can be counted upon to train our individual citizens so that when they grow up they can exercise the intelligence that will make them wise voters—responsible participants in the democratic processes by which we choose our Government and determine our policies. There was a similar hopeful confidence at the end of worldwar—I that through democratic education the statesmen would be trained and developed who would be able, under this new universal democratic regime, to guide men towards a solution of all the problems that still challenged him, and lead the world as a whole, towards an enduring state of peace and blessedness and prosperity.

### Existentialism in the Modern Age

As you know, what has happened, in the west and in the world at large, has been something very different from what had been hopefully expected. The democratic statesmen were unable to muster enough intelligence to forestall the rise of Hitler in Germany and Mussolini in Italy—to control the forces which have expressed themselves in Fascist Dictatorship in various parts of the world and the Communist totalitarianism as well. World war-II proved impossible to avoid. Now there is the uneasy anxiety all over the world and especially in the West, that perhaps a third world war, likely to be even more destructive than either of the two earlier ones may not be entirely ruled out.

This trend of events, especially coming so soon after the optimistic confidence in democracy and in democratic intelligence that was so strong at the end of the first war has not only plunged people into a state of anxious concern for themselves and their destiny but has also very seriously weakened the trust in reason that

had been characteristic of western thinking. In a world it has made all the main features of existentialism seem very plausible. So this philosophy, not only by the factors that I mentioned earlier, but also by these historical and political forces, has been gaining strength for thirty odd years:

It seems more credible now than it did before to western man that no one can escape an anxious concern about the living problems in which he finds himself immersed because of his existence on the face of the planet and his existence at this particular time. It seems more plausible that philosophy, if it is sound philosophy, cannot help but be an interpreter to man of these existential concerns—that it should, above all else, provide an instrument by which man can come to understand himself in this anxious situation and find such guidance as he can towards

the solution of these practical problems that harass him.

If I am right in assessing the situation in this way, it is clear that existentialism responds to a wider human concern than the academic preoccupation with the philosophy of language, and we may expect that from the relatively adolescent stage at which existential thinking now stands it will develop in the near future into a more mature philosophy. It needs to relate itself more significantly than it has hitherto to earlier currents of western philosophy and science, avoiding some of the extremes to which in certain existential thinkers it has been led. It needs also to come to grips with the existential strain in Eastern philosophies, both Indian and Chinese. At least it would be my hope, if not my prediction, that existentialism will develop in those directions.

## Problem of the Hour

Sri B. V. Narasimhaswami  
(All-India Satsamaj, Madras)

A benevolent Providence in its creation or evolution alike, organic and inorganic, is producing and developing correlates (Dwandas), that is, good and evil mixed up the one counter balancing the other so nicely as to save the entire universe from destruction—just as the churning of the ocean produces both the dreadful poison (Halsheela), and the divine nectar, the corrective. In the advance of civilization, knowledge began as one, but of necessity, its various branches had to be developed separately, and again nectar and poison were kept apart from each other and developed without reference to the extent of development in the other.

### Cause of Conflict

Advance in material science has proceeded at a phenomenal rate, and all distance has been conquered and the whole of space (at least within our ken) has been interlinked and brought very close together with the result that war in one place tends to become a world war. The dangers of a world war have been heightened by the wonderful advance of material science with its atomic and hydrogen bombs, bacterials, viruses, etc., so much so that many serious thinkers are dreading the extinction of the whole human race and all the achievements of civilization. The problem of the hour, therefore, is how to avert such world wars.

Considering Nature's plan of producing the venin and the toxin on the one side, and on the other the anti-venin and anti-toxin, either in the same system or in sufficient proximity to each other, we need not despair. World wars naturally have evoked world Parliaments of religion to rouse up the world conscience and consciousness to the seriousness of the situation and the discovery of suitable remedies. Theoretically considered, the remedy is patent. Wars and world wars are due to covetousness, mutual jealousies and hatred. The remedy for this is self-sacrifice, spirit of love and co-operation to the utmost extent possible.

#### Remedy

We notice that the latter principles also are getting remarkable application and development in various countries and in various ways. Communism with all its horrors has still this root principle of vitality and commonsense that every person in the State should be provided with a fairly good or practically equal chance of continuing his labour and getting maintained by the State at every stage of life.

The principle of Love and Justice must be properly applied and refined of all the dress that makes it harmful in its present state and methods. Love, that is, mutual love of every human being to every other human being—not every human being within the State only, but every human being in the world—is the obvious prescription of Divine Providence. This may be admitted by many who may still however consider it only as a counsel of perfection. Many deem this impracticable, but it is high time that we should rid ourselves of such weak submission to illusions.

Man's capacity and man's daring have practically no limits. International congresses and missions sent out by

them, individually and in groups, may influence people's minds all over the universe, and make them recognize the essential irrationality of warfare, especially of such destructive warfare as noted above. There is a very large amount of mutual love and trust born in our nature, and it is by the neglect of this precious element of our nature, in our material advance and political and social arrangements, that this element has been overcast and subdued by elements of grab, hatred and destruction.

#### Outlawing of War

Just as humanity has penalized murder, adultery, blackmail, etc., as perpetrated by one individual against another, war as perpetrated by one society against another or by one section against another section of mankind can and should be penalized. That will give us the golden age hold for the individual and humanity. As for the exact methods by which this consummation is to be achieved, there is bound to be considerable difference of opinion, but that there are such ways and means which cannot possibly be denied. Let us try and find out how popular conscience can be roused to the golden truths of all religions which must rest naturally on love of man to man and love of man to God.

We are all God's children, and why should we hate and kill each other? Nationalism is certainly not the last word of man's advancement. Internationalism or universalism must be the last word, and that we should endeavour to establish. As for its practicability, the brilliant examples of very great souls like Jesus may be considered in this connection. Jesus stressed love amongst all his followers and insisted upon the love being spread out to humanity. Jesus's immediate followers adopted socialistic methods of life,

### Central Principle of Religion

Similarly, the followers of other great Mahatmas and souls have started systems in which the central principle is love of each to the other resulting in and evidenced by sacrifice to the utmost, and sharing of honours of labour by all. This is bound to become successful in increasing measure within the existing national states; and by due and proper methods of propaganda, the entire humanity can adopt the same principle.

At present on account of the vicious state of racial, national and religious development, the starting of any new consciousness, national, racial or religious has become a means of consolidating only small groups and excluding everything outside these in a hostile spirit and manner. Religions, therefore, that is, practically all great religions have led to religious wars. Religion has been the means of division in the past as it is still in the present, as people are fond of stressing externals in which they differ from followers of other systems and neglecting or comparatively slurring over the common essentials of all religions.

God being love, the essence of all religion and Religion is undoubtedly love. Love pursued without any limit must make the individual Divine and must make Society perfectly harmonious—society including entire humanity.

So, it is stressing the essence of all religions that must be made the main work of not only this world parliament but of every other organization which has the same aims. This central point should never be forgotten in the working out of the resolutions that this parliament or any other similar parliament may pass. It is no use merely recording our conviction that the world calls for universal love, and sending out persons to work out resolu-

tions, who, however, establish and confirm differences leading to hatred or even distrust. Our emissaries must give what they preach, must love every one, must sacrifice everything, and must show the world, especially the world with which they are in immediate contact that the golden torch of love dissolves all obstacles to unity and harmony.

### Progressive Knowledge

As an accessory to this part of the programme, there must be development of science, art and philosophy, for religion must be based on all these. Knowledge was in the time of the Vedas, one single whole. Music and mathematics, astrology and astrology, medicine and poetry, etc., all came within its ambit, and any one who tried in gain a grip of knowledge has to be in touch with every branch of knowledge. The necessity for advance led to division of subjects, and specialization led remarkable progress in every particular branch. But as already stated, the divorcing of one branch of knowledge from another, though temporarily necessary, if left to itself, produces chaos. Synthesis must of necessity follow, and the inter-relation between sciences is as essential for human advance as the inter-relation of all states and cultures. In point of fact almost every branch of science or art is found to have a very important contacts and roots with many number of other branches.

To begin with, religion is based on philosophy. That is based on ethics, psychology, social culture, and development of all physical sciences and various arts. Taking psychology for instance, the extent of evil produced by purely analytical and hypothetical treatment was the cause of the revolt called Gestalt psychology, which has insisted, over and over again, on

The necessity for synthesis Gestalt theory has been applied to every known science art or piece of knowledge or culture, and that synthesis which Gestalists stress will be the secret of the world parliament's success.

### Synthesis of Knowledge

We have to synthesize all knowledge. We have to understand ourselves as part of, or the root of, spiritual endeavour and spiritual advance which really constitute the whole of religion. We have to synthesize the results of material science and of logic and mathematics and all the social sciences before we can make any good use of the results of our advance. If these are synthesized we are nearer the true and proper appreciation of ourselves that is of all mankind and are in a better position to discover the remedy for the problems that have beset us.

Human advance is regional mental and moral compared with the material advance has been extremely slow and backward. More attention has now to be paid to our moral and mental problems. Let us discover how to make ourselves really useful how we can understand ourselves and our neighbours better. Let us get to a truer conception of the self, a conception that will lead us to human solidarity and unity. In this effort various branches of knowledge till now practically ignored by the vast mass of mankind such as the sciences dealing with mystic arts like Yoga Mantra Sashtra, Clairvoyance, etc. have to be attended to.

### Clairvoyance

It is with a feeling of shame that I note the fact that the truth of clairvoyance, that is a mind's being able to study other minds and the facts take place in

distant places far away from view and even occurring remote times, past or future has been fairly clearly established even in previous centuries, and yet the amount of attention bestowed by "philosophers" and "scientists" on this subject is insignificant, and not a matter for pride.

Today if any serious person tries to make experiments establishing one person to read what goes on elsewhere at the present time, or what is concealed in a writing concealed from him he will achieve the most remarkable results and by even the simplest methods. Yet how many are now busy with this work? We find big books written on Time Prophecy etc., by famed philosophers which show a marked ignorance of the elementary facts mentioned above.

### Inner Being

What is this capacity in man that enables him to know what is far away from sight at present? How it is related to the real substratum of proved prophecy? What are the other faculties, like the faculty of seeing the unseen by some special sense lying dormant to us and awaiting to be developed by serious minded people? Truth we must have at all costs. If we work in that spirit we shall make even within a few decades such a great advance that we shall be in a better position to solve our present political, social, and other world problems.

It is in a spirit of hope that I appeal to all those who may be interested in this subject and who may take it up in various parts of all countries either now or in the immediate future, to cast aside all prejudices and narrowness of vision and daringly seek the truth wherever it is to be found, and boldly apply it to cure humanity of all its ills.

# Oneness of Existence

Sri Swami Omkar

(Shanti Ashram, Walfair)

**Children of Immortality:**

**Fellow Pilgrims of Different Faiths:**

May I greet you all in the name of the One Almighty God, who is expressing in all of you, sparkling in your very eyes, throbbing in your hearts, flowing in your breath and who is the Indweller of your very being—the One without a second! I feel it a great privilege, to offer my offering to all of you You who are the advocates and representatives of various faiths, creeds and creeds of all the old and new religions of the world.

That which unites man with God—the Source—is considered as the real Religion I feel now that which unites the people of all creeds and religions in the name of the One God, bringing harmony, unity and understanding is the real Parliament of Religions. As the string binds all the flowers in a garland, let this Parliament of Religions bind all the people of all the demonstrations of the East and the West into One Universal Whole or Complete-ness, making us behold the Sweet Face of God in every face What blessed world it would be, to see the sacred Image of God in everyone, ignoring the outer differences in the Children of the One God.

## Self-Reformation

I am one of those who firmly believe that messages that one gives to one self are more effective than those that are delivered in public with the object of reforming others. In self-reformation man begins the reformation of himself. His message is first for himself and then for others. He is establishing peace within his heart before trying to spread it outside.

As stressed by Swami Rama Tirtha, reforms are wanted not of others but of

themselves. With this self-reformation begins world reformation. Although the progress is slow like that of crawling ants, it must be noted that even crawling ants ultimately reach their goal.

Let me share the essence of my little verse with you:

"Why say: this man god that man,  
He and you are one. Give up this  
business of duality, of saying, 'He and  
I.' Behold all as the One Atman, and  
thus attain Eternal Peace and Infinite  
Bliss, now god here."

Can one see oneself in you, in all creation even in those that criticize and misunderstand one? That is the real test. Here comes all the struggle, to try to crush the human ego and to express the divine, to annihilate the ego and to glorify the Atman. Only the blessed one, one who has conquered the ego, one who is dead to the world of name, fame and other hawtching forms, can behold oneself in others. Unto him, "others" do not exist at all. All is Himself, the one, indivisible Atman, the self-sufficient Light.

## God-Consciousness

All this sounds very grand in theory, but what one needs is God-consciousness in practical life. Theory without practice is a mere burden to the mind and intellect. As often repeated, "A ounce of practice is worth more than a pound of theory," rather let me say a ton of theory. Then, what are we to do now? Let us practise and practise what we know already. Simple practise is all that is required. What is most important is constant practice of feeling the Presence of God, in all that we do, speak and think. The Practice of Ahmadvaita, Love Universal is needed, and

one is in he centered in Brahmavritti-God-consciousness always.

Practice of the Presence of God, not now and then, but each and every moment of one's life, feeling Him within and expressing Him without, is the secret of all happiness and Peace. Blessed are they who are centered in the Atman, the Indwelling Light, the one Indivisible Self.

### One Self in All

There are many ways by which one can progress in the material world, as well as in the spiritual world. The worst way of progressing is trying to grow by oppressing others, as we often see in the world of duality. Did you ever hear that wise saying: "Do not try to grow tall, by heheading others?" One who sees himself in others is the real sage. The ignorant man desires to conquer everybody by crushing everyone else, but the sage seeks to win all with Love Universal, seeing Himself in all, for the essence of all cults, creeds, nay, the sources and goal of all religions and faiths is to recognize the same, one, indivisible Light.

Peace that passeth all understanding belongs only to those rare and blessed

souls who can see the One in the many who refuse to see anything other than the one underlying Reality, the interpenetrating Presence, in spite of outer differences and disparities. It is all a matter of daily practice which leads in silent growth inner progress and gradual evolution. It is in the culmination of such that we can see man in God and God in man. It is high time for all of us, to realize that man and God are not separate and two, but One. As repeated often by sages, "Worship of man is worship of God." Blessed are they who are engaged in the Universal Worship rising above all the man-made castes, creeds and nationalities.

In the sacred memory of the Parliament of Religions, to each and every one who has the blessed privilege of gathering here, to every seeker of Truth, my heart longs to offer a garland not of rubies and diamonds that can be lost or stolen, neither a garland of flowers that fades and withers, but a garland of the pearls of peace, in the form of the Peace Prayer, which can be worn by the votaries of any religion or even by atheists, for it belongs to all, the children of the One Almighty—the All-Loving and the All-embracing God.

## Universal Brotherhood and Spiritual Education

Sri Husein Rose

(Indonesia)

All religions throughout the world which are derived fundamentally from the spiritual illumination of their founders, represent interpretations of the cosmic Truth in terms of particular requirements whilst their messages may be valid for all time, their scriptures are pre-eminently influenced by considerations of the race and epoch to which they were originally vonchanted.

Even today as ever before, human weakness, blindly attached to sensual phan-

omena, pays exaggerated respect to material symbols. People forget that the omnipotence of God is nowise affected or limited by spatial and temporal phenomena, and that He can reach us just as well in our own homes as on Himalayan peaks, in Arabian deserts, forests of Hindustan, or the valley of Jordan.

### Divine Revelation in Scientific Terminology

There is divine message for every individual in terms perfectly adapted to his own understanding irrespective

# Stages of Spiritual Evolution

Sri K. M. Manshi

(Governor of Uttar Pradesh)

The spirit of man is rooted in the mind. The mind is rooted in the body, the body in material life. This life is also rooted in the organism of life made of the tree, the animal and the man. The living organism is rooted in the sunshines and the soil, the river and the mountains and the climatic conditions of the land. The collective welfare,—material, economic, social, political, moral and spiritual welfare—make for the health of this organism. Of them all, spiritual welfare is the most potent, for, by the sense of oneness which it creates, is the organism bound, maintained and vitalized.

## Unfoldment of the Spirit

There is yet a wider organism of life. We call it the world. It is a living organism though we know it not. It consists of a single organism, one world, dependent on the physical determinants of the globe.

The life of the globe is to its turn a part of the larger, still wider life of the universe which has an organism of its own, physical, moral and spiritual. We are but the tiniest of its tiny fragments.

Unfolding the whole universal organism is the Spirit unfolding itself through gradual stages to flower as the fundamental aspiration is man.

We must move out of our narrow egoistic self to a vast foundation which reaches out to a collective consciousness of oneness with the whole of India, from India to One World, from One World to all Existence not in thought nor in ideal, but by the aspiration transforming step by step the way of individual life and the life of the organism.

We must see and feel more and more universal consciousness. We must see, not in theory, not in belief, but in living and

feeling, all to ourselves and all in God, "all in Him and Him in all."

## Fundamental Aspiration

God is and He upholds the creation; the Spirit is His expression in man, at the Law of the Spirit is supreme.

The aim of man's efforts is to transform himself, his fellow-beings and the material world, so that the Spirit is unfolded in life and God becomes manifest.

To understand, to realize and to follow the Law of Moral Causation is the first step towards the discovery and unfoldment of the Spirit in life. In its aspects of goodness, truth, non-covetousness, non-want and non-possession, this law supports the Moral Order in the universe. It is inclusive, it imposes upon man the need to keep to the purity of means as much as to the ends. No man may achieve good by wicked means be a devil in order to emerge as an image of God.

The divine element in man is the Fundamental Aspiration which yearns to light love beauty bliss joy freedom and calm. Because of this he is not an atom moved by physical chemical laws nor merely a unit of life like an amoeba nor a bundle of instinctive reactions like an animal, not even a thinking machine. He believes himself to be. Because of it he is a spark of divinity whose destiny lies towards his source God.

## Three Requisites

He who chooses God in this way, is chosen by Him.

No achievement is possible without the next determining element, *utsaha*, or unwavering zeal. When this is supported by resolute will, *dhriti*, it is converted into yearning. "My zeal for the Lord half

eaten me up," said an Aposife. The aspirant has similarly to be "eaten up" before he can make any progress. As Patanjali says, Yuga comes easily only to him who has developed intense yearning, *samraga*.

Ramakrishna yearned for the Divine Mother so intensely that he was ready to die if She did not appear, and She did appear to him.

It is this zeal when properly developed that enables the aspirant to pass one mission after another. The first will be reached when his fundamental aspirations towards Beauty, Freedom and Joy become pure and intense. The second, when the resolute will, properly developed, maintains the strength of the effort unimpaired.

The third, when the lure of the senses is overcome and attachment, wrath, or fear, fail to sway the aspirant from his course.

If the aspirant has developed the resolute will even a little, in the first stage, he will not have wasted his effort. His mind will slowly become one-pointed and remain fixed on the goal of self-realization. All other goals will become illusory.

In the next stage, the moulds of the ego-desire, egotism, pride, anger and violence, will be broken. When the ego begins to dissolve, peace descends on the soul of the aspirant. He acquires the calmness of that faith which knows no wavering, no tension, no disquietude, no regrets, no anxieties, no impatience. The moment he develops this peace, he is ready to receive God; he becomes God-minded.

#### Supreme Fulfilment

In the further stage, God-mindfulness will take the shape of continuous readiness to welcome God, to contact Him and to live in Him. Desires, pleasures and, sorrows then afflict the aspirant no more. All created things appear equal because they are His. There is a feeling of oneness,

joy. This individual mind is slowly being transformed into the spiritual mind, where the presence of God is ever present.

In the third stage, there will be steady movements when the aspirant will develop a sustained sense of identity with God. This will gradually become a fixed habit. His mood will be one of complete surrender to God.

In the first stage, the endeavour of the aspirant, though he retains the ego in its native form, is inspired by a force which transcends it. In the last, his individual will is merged in God's and acts in unison with it.

The aspirant's egotistic emotions are then replaced by the movements of Love, Bliss, and Freedom. The aspirant is then no longer an individual centre of consciousness but has entered God and is a centre of universal consciousness. Then what he used to call "me" is found to have been no more than the tiny of countless extraneous influences.

This brings the aspirant to the goal of self-fulfilment which is nothing but the expansion of the individual ego till its narrow shell is broken to merge in God. Even the desires and impulses, which he thinks constitute his individual freedom, are dissolved. True freedom has been reached.

#### Training is Essential

But we have to be careful. The mere knowledge of the process by which the ego is merged in God is not a living truth. It is not realization, neither it is self-fulfilment. Sometimes, as people studying Yuga have found it, this little knowledge, instead of bringing humility or surrender, feeds the ego. He is then inclined to assume prematurely that he is God's instrument.

This is a false and dangerous assumption. It may produce inertia; it may

develop conceit and megalomania Anyway, It is bound to arrest all progress

It is not easy to surrender our individual will to the higher will of God. It requires a long training in receiving and responding to right influences.

This preliminary training takes two forms:

In one of these forms the aspirant has to train himself to turn his egotistic activities towards light and truth by maintaining the fundamental aspirations towards Beauty, Freedom and Joy at white heat.

In its second form these activities have to fulfil the mandates of God by a conscious obedience to Him.

When this training has been undergone individual energy will cease to be personal

and aspirative. It will form part of the functioning of God's will but the aspirant has to be watchful. There are no railway signals to indicate when and how the individual energy has been merged in God's. For long individual effort might not appear to have made any progress. Even if it has made any progress there is no guarantee that it will steadily maintain its new functioning and at all times the test is that as the aspirant takes one step after the other egotism, impurity and ignorance progressively lose their hold over him. The mind encompasses a larger scope of vision. There would then be ever increasing humility and peace. (A paper submitted to the Seventh World Religion Correspondence Congress held under the auspices of the Ananda-Kyo Japan)

## Spiritual Heritage of India

Dr T M P Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D.

(Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras)  
(A recent Discourse given at Sivananda Ashram)

There is a saying in the *Dharmopada* that the good report of a great man travels far and wide like the reputation of the Himalayas. Here we have both the physical and spiritual Himalayas and the reputation of the latter has travelled farther and wider than the fame of the former.

If Bharatavarsha is great today it is not because of our geographical extent. It is not because of our economic power. Not because of anything else. It is because of our unbroken tradition of spirituality and the Himalayas represent India's spirituality. I am not one of those who believe that the Indian people as a whole are more religious or greater spiritually than any other people in the world. Having gone round it I know that there are great and good people in every corner of the globe. In the most sophisticated city you

will find some one or other humble son serving in a silent way the entire humanity praying in seclusion and so, as a race as a people we cannot claim to be more religious than any other people or race.

But if India is a spiritual land if India has a genius for religious life it is because there is something in her atmosphere that makes for the appearance of great geniuses of spirit in every age. Even in the most decadent of times in India a history there were great men, great men of spiritual vision, great men who saw far into the future, great men who guaranteed the well-being of the entire human race.

Sankara

May I remind you that when the great Sankara was born our country was in a chaotic condition. His was

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and separative. It will form part of the functioning of God's will, but the aspirant has to be watchful. There are no railway signals to indicate when and how the individual energy has been merged in God's. For long, individual effort might not appear to have made any progress. Even if it has made any progress, there is no guarantee that it will steadily maintain its new functioning, and at all times the test is that, as the aspirant takes one step after the other, egotism, impurity and ignorance progressively lose their hold-over him. The mind encompasses a larger scope of vision. There would then be ever-increasing humility and peace. (A paper submitted to the Seventh World Religion Correspondence Congress held under the auspices of the Ananai-Kyo, Japan)

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will find some one or other, humble souls, serving in a silent way the entire humanity, praying in seclusion; and so, as a race, as a people, we cannot claim to be more religious than any other people or race.

But if India is a spiritual land, if India has a genius for religious life, it is because there is something in her atmosphere that makes for the appearance of great geniuses of spirit in every age. Even in the most decadent times in India's history, there were great men, great men of spiritual vision, great men who saw far into the future, great men who guaranteed the well-being of the entire human race.

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May I remind you that when the great Sankara was born, our country was in a chaotic condition. His

not a political mission. He was not the way of violence and, therefore, he did not attempt to create a monarchy or empire, although he would have succeeded if he had wanted to. He came for a greater mission. He knew that for a thousand years India was bound to go through the travails of political slavery. He knew all this, yet he wanted that our country, our people, should hold together, should not go down under the weight of the foreigners' heels, and, therefore, he strove for the cultural unity of our country. He went up to the vastness of the Himalayas; he went down to the Ganges several times; and he established institutions to safeguard the spiritual unity of our country.

#### Pedestal of Greatness

As I am fond of saying, spiritual India knows no frontiers at all. Although physical India, the geographical India, is limited in extent, the Spiritual India has no frontiers at all, and it was this spiritual India that Acharya Sankara wanted to preserve for the future of humanity, and great men like Acharya Sankara have come from time to time, and even today we find before us great geniuses in spirit. It is because of them that India is unique. It is because of them that we can claim India to be a spiritual country not because of the millions of mouths that have to be fed every day, not because of the millions of mouths that are being added on year after year. It is because of this unbroken spiritual tradition that our country is great. It is only when we realize the unique place that India occupies in the world today and strive our best to follow such great men and sages whom we have before us that we shall be proud to call ourselves Indians, sons and daughters of Bharatavarsha.

So I am happy to be with you tonight, because this is a rare occasion which does not come to one every day. One or two

earn it, and I am glad to know that I have earned it today, and I am much gladder, because this speech of mine happens to be the eighth-of-the-month speech. On this day we honour in a special way Swami Sivananda, because this happens to be his birthdate. And may I join you in offering my homage to him and in praying that he should continue to guide us for many years to come?

#### Union for Study of Religions

When I knew that I was coming along to Rishikesh I wrote to Swami Sivananda about my coming, and I also told him that I would like to take this opportunity of introducing an organization to this place with which I am connected. The organization's name is the "Union for the Study of Great Religions." When I was asked to take charge of this organization in India, I wrote to Swamiji about it and immediately I got the response saying that this Ashram would co-operate in every possible way to the work of the Union.

I know that the work which is connected with the Union is being done here every day, and the work is to unite all those who believe in religion, who attempt to follow the way of the Spirit, and to convert those who either doubt or have gone along the negative path. Now, that is the purpose of the Union, and that purpose is being fulfilled to such Ashrams as this. Here already several sessions of the Parliament of Religions have met. As a child I remember the great parliaments or congresses of religion that were conducted by Swami Rajeswarananda, in Madras; and from those days onwards I have developed a passion for religion—not religions in the plural, but religion in the singular, and it was, therefore, easy for me to agree to take charge of the Union in this country.

This Union was started at Oxford when

Dr Radhakrishnan stayed there as Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics, and the moving spirit behind this work was the late Prof H N Spalding, who was responsible for creating this chair at Oxford. Spalding, Radhakrishnan and a few others met and wanted to do something so that humanity may get the benefit of the light of religion, so that in the name of religion people may not quarrel, and, therefore, they thought of a plan, and the plan took the shape of the "Union for the Study of Great Religions". Just a few months before his death Prof Spalding wrote to me and asked if I would act as the Union's Secretary for India, and I readily accepted the invitation. Now I thought that I could take this opportunity of speaking to you about the ideas behind this movement, because those ideas are not different from those with which we are familiar under the name of Vedanta. Vedanta is not one religion among religions. Vedanta is not a particular faith. It is the essence of all faiths. It is the heart of all religions, and, therefore, the aim of Vedanta is to unite all people who are religious, and what is more, to unite even all those who call themselves irreligious, because no one can be irreligious in the true sense of the term, and thus Vedanta is the symbol of the spiritual heritage of India.

#### Astika and Nastika

In India, we have had groups of people who denied the existence of God and denounced the authority of the Vedas and they were called 'Charvaka,' materialists, but materialism in this country was not a full fledged school of philosophy. As I sometimes say, it is a *Samyakadarshana*, it is a temporary mood of the mind, it is a passing phase and will not remain forever, and so even the Charvaka cannot be a Nastika (atheist) for all time. He must become an Astika (theist) sooner or later. Going a

step further, I would say, even the Charvaka, when he is in that mood, cannot be a total Nastika. As Sankara says in one place of the *Sutra-Bhashya*, no one can be a total denier, no one can deny the Self, because he who denies is the Self.

य एव हि निराकर्ता स पूर्वं तस्य स्वरूपम्॥

#### Orbit of Belief

So even the Charvaka, the denier, the denier, cannot be a Nastika in the total, plenary sense of the term. So everyone must be an Astika, must believe in something or other. Some believe in things of value and others believe in things of disvalue. If you will not believe in God, you will have to worship mammon. So no one can escape the orbit of belief. Everyone is being drawn by the gravitational pull of faith. If you destroy the Father in Heaven, if you deny the Messiahship of the Christ, if you burn today the holy Bible, you will have to honour Lenin or Marx and make *Das Kapital* your Bible and create your own church. You cannot escape faith. Faith is coeval with man. Faith is that which moves the Spirit in man. Sometimes the faith may be wrong. The faith may be evil. At other times the faith may be good.

As many of you know, one of the chapters of the *Bhagavadgita* is entitled "Devasura-samapradvibhagayoga". There are two types of character, the Daivika and the Asurika, (the godly and the ungodly). The Puranas describe recurrent wars between the gods and the demons, and they tell us that every time the gods won a victory over the demons. But this is only an allegory. The warfare rages in the heart of every one of us, between forces which are godly and those which are ungodly. We are believers all the time. But sometimes we believe in evil things, at other times in vices that are good. The Devasura-samara (war between gods and demons) goes on in the

heart of everyone, and, therefore, we cannot look down upon any creature and say, "he is despicable, I will have nothing to do with him, I will not touch him even with a pair of tonga." If we do so, we ourselves become evil. Evil enters our hearts.

#### Purpose of Religion

The Devas (gods) and the Asuras (demons) are not two distinct racial groups. We are mixtures of both. Sankara in his commentary of the Gita makes this clear that when good tendencies are predominant in us, we become gods. When the tendencies of the opposite nature become strong, we become demons. When a balance is struck, we are simply human. So we have to aim at first to strike a balance as a stepping-stone to the attaining of the godliness in us.

देवीसंप्रदिमोत्ताप निवन्धयातुरी मता ॥

The heritage of the gods leads to liberation, takes us to immortality, whereas the heritage of the demons leads us downward, forcing more fetters and making us bond-slaves. So this fight between the godly and the ungodly goes on in our hearts, and the purpose of religion is to strengthen the forces that make for goodness and subdue those that make for evil. The purpose of religion is simple. All other doctrines and dogmas are of minor importance. Every religion worth its name, however low it may be considered, has for its purpose, the ennobling of man's character, the strengthening of the good forces in him, the raising of his moral and spiritual standard. That is the object of religion. That is the purpose of faith, and, therefore, as far as this central purpose of faith or religion is concerned, there is no difference, no distinction, no quarrel, between one traditional faith and another. The prophets, the great sages and seers, speak with one voice. They give one message. It is the lesser men who do not have that vision.

of perception that misinterpret religion and quarrel among themselves.

#### Buddhism

Take the example of Buddhism. Buddhism was not killed in the land of its birth. In fact, Buddha was born a Hindu, and he died a Hindu. It was only later that Buddhism became a separate religion. Buddha came as a reformer. Buddha wanted to purify the social fabric of our country. You can quote almost parallel passages from the Upanishads to those you find in the *Dhammapada*. For instance, the 'no soul' doctrine is nowhere to be found in the *Dhammapada*, which according to the Buddhist tradition itself consists of the sayings of Lord Buddha. So, after Buddha, several schools of Buddhism arose and they quarrelled among themselves and the schools of Buddhism gradually went out of use. It is not the fault of Vedants. If the so-called orthodox schools have gone out of use, like the Nysyas and Vaisheshikas, we do not say that these have been sent away from India. Our oldest tradition, our philosophical heritage, has grown by absorbing things of value, by purifying itself periodically. This is the tradition of Indian culture. Doctrines do not matter. It is life that is of the utmost importance. If we take care of life, doctrines will follow.

#### One Reality

In the *Rigveda*, which is the earliest religio-philosophical literature, a great sage says:

एकं सत्त्वं यज्ञा पूर्णं अमिः  
यम् मातरिष्यनमाऽः ॥

"Reality is one, but sages give it various names as Agni, Yama, Matarisva." In the theological parlance of the day, the names of Agni, Yama and Matarisva are mentioned, but we can well understand the spirit of these names; whatever be the name by which you call God, it is the same God

that you worship. In a couple of well-known stanzas the Lord of the *Bhagavadgita* has given to humanity the charter of spiritual freedom for all time to come :

यो यो यां यां तनुं भरः अद्यात्मितुमिद्धति ।  
तस्य तस्याचलां अद्वा तामेव विद्यथाम्यहम् ॥  
ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्त्यैव भजाम्यहम् ॥  
मम वर्त्मनुवर्त्तते मनुष्याः पार्वे सर्वेषाः ॥

(To whatever form I am worshipped, in that form I accept that worship. Whatever be the way in which a devotee approaches Me, I accept him.)

आगामात्पतिरं तोये यथा गच्छति सप्तारः  
सर्वदेवमस्कारः केशरे प्रति गच्छति ॥

(Just as waters from the heavens falling in different places, give rise to several rivers which wend different courses but reach the same identical sea, even so, the oblations offered to God in various ways reaches Him alone.)

#### Hindu Religion

So far as Hindu tradition is concerned, there can be no room for quarrel, there can be no basis for religious strife. It is true that sometimes we have become misguided and have quarrelled among ourselves on grounds of religion and faith. That is because of our ignorance that is not the fault of the faith itself. That is not the fault of religion. Our religion has no name at all. It is not a founded faith. It does not depend on any single personality. We call our Dharma 'Vaidika,' 'Samāna,' the religion of wisdom, the religion eternal, the religion that is timeless. If there is any religion that has no proper name, that does not depend upon any individual personality, that is what is known as Hinduism. So there can be no limitations.

There are others who believe that their faith must become the universal faith. This is the basis of what is known

as conversion and proselytism. They believe that God has shown a unique path to them alone, and that unless the rest of mankind adopts that path, there is no salvation for it. Now, this is responsible for enormous cruelty in the name of God, in the name of religion.

#### Reason for Indifference to Religion

Very often the criticism is levelled against young minds of India today, that they are becoming ungodly, that they are going away from religion, that we are heading for times which are terrible; but if you analyze this criticism, you will find that there is not much basis for it. The young people cannot be blamed for this situation. When they find that there is so much of quarrel and so numerous acts of inhumanity in the name of religion, little wonder that they turn away from religion. When they find that, in the name of God, in the name of religion, in the name of faith, man becomes aggressive, violent, greedy, bigoted and dogmatic, I ask, is it a thing for surprise that young intelligent minds hate religion? But there is no real reason for such hatred, we know.

What I am trying to make out is that the so-called enthusiasts for religion have not understood their business. Even the leaders of churches—I use the word 'churches' in no narrow sense,—have misled their followers, and therefore there is a questioning of value and authority of faith today. If only we can show to the enquiring minds that this is not religion, that religion is the very opposite of this, I see no reason why the young minds cannot be changed. From my own personal experience I can tell you that the heart of the youth of India is sound today. Provided the proper approach is made, the youth will respond properly. It is because of wrong leadership that the youth are going astray.

### Uniformity is Impossible

No one can even dream that there will come a day when there will be one formal faith for the entire humanity, because that is contrary to human nature. There are others who believe that a new universal religion can be created by putting together some features taken from the various fundamental faiths, that we can create a new faith which will become universal, but that again has not succeeded, and is not bound to succeed. If you cut flowers from various plants and make a bouquet to adorn your drawing-room, those flowers will fade away on the next day. They will not survive. If you remove the flowers from the living plant, they will not last long. Similarly, if you remove some doctrines and some practices from each of these religions and create a new faith, make an amalgam, this thing is bound to fail. Akbar tried it; he failed. Others in our own time have tried it; they have failed, too. Means of approach are bound to be different. Even as no two faces agree in all respects, but yet they are fundamentally of the same type, even so, no two minds are identical, even though they share in a common central nature; and as there are many minds, so there should be many faiths.

### Inner Conversion

Conversion has to be vertical and not horizontal. If you change your label, you do not become a better man. It is only when the inner Spirit grows that there is real conversion, and that real conversion is possible in any genuine religious tradition. The aim of Hinduism is not to make Christians Hindus or Muslims Hindus, but the aim, as Swami Vivekananda said, is to make a Christian a better Christian, a Muslim a better Muslim. So all these external labels are accidents. What is important in religion

and faith is the inner fire of spirituality. When that burns, then all the other things are immaterial. That is why a great psychologist and philosopher of America, William James, in his book, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, tells us through psychological analysis of representative saints of the world, that all these great men speak one and the same tongue, and that they belong to one and the same tribe. Wherever they may be born, in whatever time they may live, they have one identical message, and that is to call man back from his brutal nature to his innate divinity, which is his birthright. This is the purpose of religion. The salvation of humanity lies in Spirit, and in nothing else.

### The Ultimate Value

India's genius lies in spirituality. The day she forgets that, the day she loses that, that day she will perish. There is no doubt about it. The fact that she has not lost sight of it, the fact that she still remembers it, is because, as I said earlier, of this unbroken succession of saints and sages, who keep on dinging it into our ears. Look at the enormous volume of books and pamphlets that flows from this place, (Sivanandashram)! And what is the purpose of all this? It is to keep on reminding us what our heritage is, what our goal is, what our genius is. So we have a mission and that mission we should never lose sight of. While we must grow stronger, materially, economically and spiritually, it is the last that is the goal. As all of you know, of the four Purusharthas—Artha, Kama, Dharma and Moksha—Artha and Kama have value not in the intrinsic sense, but only in the instrumental sense. Even Dharma has only instrumental value. It is Moksha, spiritual freedom, that has the sole intrinsic value. Political power and economic strength

have value only so far as they go to strengthen our spiritual might. That we can never forget.

### Vedanta

So, it is in keeping with the mission of India, it is in keeping with the mission of our country that the aim and object of the 'Union for the Study of Great Religions' have been conceived, and they can succeed only when the spirit of Vedanta pervades everywhere, and I am glad to say that the spirit of Vedanta is fast spreading — fast spreading in other countries — a fact which many of us do not realize. The reason is that Vedanta is the universal faith of man, the perennial philosophy. It has no narrowness. It means the end or the goal of wisdom, the end of all spiritual endeavour, and that is common to the entire mankind. While all other aspects of our religion, like rituals and so on may be conditioned by time and space, may have their own forms, so far as Vedanta is concerned, there is no distinction based on birth, creed or nationality or any other form whatsoever.

But there are four conditions required of the followers of the path of Vedanta. They are *nityanityavastutitela* (discrimination between what is eternal and what is non eternal), *shamutrarthaphalabhoga tiraga* (detachment from perishable things which one may gain here or hereafter), *shadsampat* (cultivation of cardinal virtues) and *mumukshutva* (longing for liberation), and these anyone can cultivate, whether of the East or West, North or South, anyone can acquire these qualifications.

Gaudapada who is said to have performed Tapas for ages in Badrikashrama, says:

परमार्थे हि द्वैत एवेद उत्त्योः।

And again

विद्यश्वो न ते चार्थं अभिगात् नियोपास॥

'Advaita is the truth. Dvaita is only a variation thereof.' Just as there can be no

quarrel between an organism and the various limbs, even so, there can be no dispute between Advaita Vedanta and other systems of thought. There is also an *alayavila* in the Upanishad where the hands and legs thought that they were unnecessarily exerting themselves for feeding the stomach. They struck work, with the result that they too, became weak and could not maintain themselves, and then they realized that their interests were not different from the interests of the organism as a whole though other schools may think that they are opposed to Advaita, but as far as Advaita is concerned, there is no opposition whatsoever. It is only from the circumference that the radish seem to be different, but at the centre they are identical.

### Advaitic Attitude

Vedanta does not reject anyone, not even the atheist, not even the non-believer, the agnostic, or the doubter. Everyone has his place, because everyone is bound to evolve. Moksha again is not an individual affair. Moksha is an experience which knows no individuality. Advaita-Moksha is not liberation of an individual or for an individual. It is release from individuality and so there can be no distinction whatsoever, and there is hope for everyone. Emphatically speaking, speaking the language of time, we might say that a single individual so and so, takes lesser time than another, but from the standpoint of the eternal, from the standpoint of the timeless, Moksha is undivisible. Moksha cannot be divided. So in Advaita experience, there is no plurality.

सुप्तो य मृत्युमानोनि य इह जाते परयति ॥

(He who sees plurality here as it were, goes from death to death.)

So, *per contra* he who enjoys universality, he who has that unitive experience

he alone is immortal. Even this is speaking in the language of Maya. When we say 'he' and 'he becomes immortal,' we adopt the language of Maya. Jivanmukti is a difficult concept to understand. It is only from others' standpoint that a Jivanmukta appears to be an individual. It is a difficult experience, but everyone must try to approach it, and gain it. That is the aim of Advaita Vedanta, and from that standpoint—if standpoint it may be called—we say that religion is one, that the Spirit is one—if we have this faith, this faith which is open-minded, then there will be peace and goodwill among mankind—it is for that we are striving.

If we remain firm and strong on this bed rock of unity, sympathy, universality,

love, if we remember this goal of our culture, if we can remember this mission of Vedanta, then we shall become flowers of humanity, spreading fragrance everywhere, with no ill-will, nothing that is bad, nothing that is repulsive and repugnant. In spite of our weaknesses, in spite of faltering steps, in spite of various defects that we have, I have every hope that we shall succeed with the strength that we will receive from the eternal, spiritual culture of our country. May God bless this land. May God make our nation strong spiritually. May the great strength and spiritual inspiration of the living witnesses to this Truth guide us, so that we can move forward and onward, and not only make our lives auhntime, but also contribute to the sanctity of the universe.

## Stray Thoughts on Religion

Sri Arthur Moore  
(England)

Tolerance can lack healing virtue if it merely proceeds from indifference or contempt. Genuine tolerance, perhaps, deserves a better name, for to tolerate something really only means that you manage to put up with it. The genuine religious tolerance which produces harmony springs from humility, and not from arrogance.

The human mind at present is quite incapable of understanding all the mysteries of the universe or apprehending the whole nature of an omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent God—if it were, the scientists would be out of a job—but the different religions provide different illustrations and different methods of approach and worship. Those who have been brought up in the practices of one religion may either be fanatically convinced that it contains the

whole truth and consequently be intolerant of other faiths, or they may be aware that their faith and the comfort and spiritual satisfaction they get from their history and upbringing and that other forms of worship and other aspects of an infinite ocean of being may be equally valid for those of a different religion.

### Image Worship

If we believe that "knowledge grows from more to more" and that error gradually gives way to truth, it is reasonable to suppose that mankind will ultimately arrive at a basic religion. Clearly, such a religion would be without dogma and without ritual. Men could still worship God in the separate ways to which they were accustomed. Those who find images helpful could continue to use images, and those who find images an anthropomorphic hindrance to their realization of an all-

pervading, immanent and infinite Spirit, could worship in their own way, but would understand their common object. This question of image-worship is the bedrock of the whole matter.

All the great religions bear marks of the struggle between these two schools of thought. In the history of the Jews, there is the ever-recurring tale of schism and the breaking away from the Mosaic Commandment "thou shalt have none other gods but me" to worship Baal, or Ammon, or Moloch and to set up images of king after king. The wise Solomon, who was no exception, built a temple for Moloch on the Mount of Olives. Christianity went precisely the same way. In Prof Oman's *History of the Dark Ages*, you may read how continuous was the see-saw between image-worshippers and iconoclasts in the early and medieval periods. One Byzantine Emperor would favour the image-worshippers and they would represent the ecclesiastic power in the Empire. His successor would be an iconoclast, and reverse the position. The Reformation turned largely on the same point, and the issue still divides Catholics and Protestants. It has also been the main cause of schisms in Protestantism. The Puritans objected to stained glass windows containing pictures and even to the ring in the marriage ceremony as savouring of idolatry, and similar ideas produced successive crops of non-conformity.

Islam is the most strictly monotheistic of all religions, but in Persia and amongst Sufi sects elsewhere, the artistic instinct has rebelled against the austerity of the Islamic doctrine. The Buddha preached a difficult doctrine, which some interpret as abolishing even the concept of God, but millions of his humble followers worship his image, and, indeed, his image is the omnipresent central fact of Buddhism.

### The Inner Meaning

I was brought up a Protestant and I owe the understanding of the inner meaning of image-worship which I later acquired entirely in the East. An interest in the Sufis and the Persian mystics began it and some acquaintance with Hindu philosophy complemented it. The point which the literal monotheist misses is that the so-called image-worshipper can be a monotheist too. To the religious philosophers of Asia and also to the common people, in general, God is not outside the universe. He is the universe, all matter is alive (precisely what the scientists are now telling us), and as the one, infinite God is everywhere, He can be worshipped even in stones and a human artist can certainly reveal divine life in an image of wood or stone, and in line and colour. Nor again is there anything incompatible between pure monotheism and prayers not directly addressed to God. In this life we look to human teachers and counsellors for help and guidance in our problems, and if we believe in survival after death, there is no inherent unreasonableness in praying to saints who were known for their love of and sympathy with suffering humanity.

Most of the "gods" of the Hindu pantheon are believed to have once been mortals, historic characters, who lived in particular parts of India and the memory of whose actions still survives. Nobody really mistakes the image for the person, but the image is a help to many as are pictures of the Virgin and the Saints to Christians, and as our friends' photographs help to keep us in some kind of telepathic communion with them. To end the idle quarrel between the image users and the iconoclasts seems to me a basic task for those who strive for religious unity in the world.

presence and power. We cannot define God, for no one can comprehend God in *toto*. You cannot see the mind or spirit. We see God in the same way that we see an answer to a mathematical problem.

The term 'Christ' represents the eternal Logos or the wisdom and the power of God functioning in the mind of man. That is the meaning of the word called 'Christ.' Another meaning is Buddha. That means the 'enlightened one.' When your intellect is illumined by the light, meaning when your conscious and subconscious mind unite together, and when you mentally and emotionally unite with your good, or ideal, then you are functioning in divine order, bringing order and harmony into your life. That is the action of God or 'Christ' taking place in the mind of man.

#### Prayer

Prayer means to accept as true what your reason and senses deny. For your reason and your senses deny what you pray for. The door of your senses is shut when you pray. One should shut out the senses, close the eyes and shut out the influence of the world and turn to the God Presence which is within. Prayer is a silent communion with God Presence, sometimes called the secret place of the Most High. This process of communion with God Presence through the medium of your own thought is called entering into the sacred sanctuary. In prayer you move from time to eternity. There is no time or space in God. God is faceless, shapeless and timeless.

#### Concept of God

God is the bad man's deliverer. God does not condemn anyone. His eyes are too pure to behold iniquity and He does not look down upon evil. God is holy and perfect, ever the same in man's own inmost being, absolutely one, whole, complete, perfect, indivisible, timeless, motionless and ageless, without face, form or figure,

the silent presence deep in the hearts of all. The absolute does not judge. All judgment is given to the son. We are all sons, and the judgment I come to is my verdict, the conclusion in my own mind. If I believe that there is a God in the skies and that He is going to punish me because of the sins that I committed, then all the days of my life would be confused and chaotic and I will be a vacillating, neurotic being.

The greatest and most important thing in all the world is to get a right concept of God, for your belief about God governs your entire life. "Man belief expressed." What do you believe about God? This is the most important question in your entire life. The answer can be, "I believe in a God of love, in a God of gentleness, kindness, indescribable beauty, boundless love, infinite intelligence and absolute harmony." Scientist Jeans said "this world was created by a thinker thinking mathematically." We see rhythm, order, proportion and beauty everywhere. Mystics realize that behind the chaos and confusion, there is ever abiding beauty, peace, harmony. The confusion is all on the surface, in the depths of your self there is absolute stillness.

#### Divine Responsiveness

Dr Carrell said "The day will come when all doctors will pray for their patients." He said that he had seen people in France and even in the research hospitals in New York, who were pronounced incurable. The doctors had done everything. In some cases the kidneys had not been functioning for four days and friends came and formed a little circle and prayed for these people. A light came into their eyes, the kidneys began to function and the miracle of God took place—because a group of people prayed. God is responsive. God wants man to be happy. God knows nothing about diseases. "I am come so that you can have life."

Nobody can compare with the founders of religions in influence over mankind. Their precepts may seem to be neglected, but the magnetic power persists from age to age. Hundreds, or it may be thousands of years after their death, they can inspire devotion and also fanaticism in masses of people. Aristotle and Plato, Spinoza,

Descartes, Hume and Kant have no such power, nor can intellect alone ever compete with feeling and emotion. For a universal religion, there will have to be a marriage of the two. (From a discourse at an international congress held under the auspices of the World Fellowship of Faiths)

## God - Communion

Rev. Dr. Joseph Murphy, D.D., Ph.D., LL.D.

(Los Angeles, California)

[From a Discourse given at Sivanandashram on 8th July, 1956]

As a man thinks, so he becomes. Thought and feelings represent man's destiny, whether he knows it or not. We know that all is law, yet all is love. Everything works according to divine order. If a boy throws a ball and breaks the window, we may say that it was an accident, but scientists can prove, it was all done according to law.

We find an awakening in the world today. People are realizing that Consciousness is the only cause. Consciousness is what man thinks, feels and believes. There is no other cause, no other power, no other presence. The scientific thinker does not give power to external things. He does not make the phenomenalistic world a cause. The scientific thinker does not make an effect a cause.

### Perspective

Whence cometh evil? The so-called evil comes from the darkened mind of man. It comes from the twilight in the mind of man. We are seeing through a darkened glass. There are many dark spots in our mind. But when man begins to discipline his five senses through spiritualizing his thoughts, feeling and emotions and his reactions to life, then he spiritualizes his whole mind and soul, which is his subjective self, and then, he begins to look out

through the eyes of love. When I look with the eyes of beauty, I no longer see anything ugly. "To the pure, all things are pure."

Jesus was a man like all other men. Some people have an idea that we in America worship Jesus. We do not worship any man, for it is written that you shall worship only God. We pay respect to Jesus, Buddha, Zoroaster and all prophets of the world. They were all illumined men, but we worship God, not Jesus. Jesus was an illumined man born like any other man. I want to make it very clear that man is his own Saviour. There is no man to save you. If you are thirsty, and someone gave you water, that would be your Jesus or your Saviour.

### Supreme Awareness

God is responsive to the nature of our thought. God is the awareness in all men. He is the being that digests my food, that transmutes it into tissue, muscles and bones. The subconscious, the intellect and all parts of your body are projections of that faceless, formless awareness within you. You call it Om. We call it I am. The words are synonymous. We have a common father, progenitor or source. God is Life. Life is one and indivisible. Knowing that I am, is God. It is the silent

outice. You do not see my dreams and aspirations. The reality of man is mind and the spirit. We are all invisible. That is the reality of us. Divest yourself of your name, your form, race. Who are you? You are spirit. That is where you go when you pray, to the realm of the mind and spirit. You enter into Eternity and there you realize that only God knows the answer. In the secret place there is boundless wisdom which created all things. To think of God is the best way to quiet the mind. The Yogi is a man who is in love with God, who has sensed his oneness with Him. He walks over the waters of confusion, and realizes his heart's desire, which is peace, light and understanding and he lives in that orbit of light, and all who come in contact with him are blessed.

#### Ioner Voice

Einstein said that he would still his mind and he would listen to the inner voice, and he hear the inner answer. This listening is not tension, but relaxation. It is a passivity, a state akin to sleep, and yet you are far from being sleepy. The conscious mind is partially submerged. Effort is reduced to a minimum. It is a controlled and disciplined state of mind.

All great musicians such as Mozart and others did the same thing. Emerson, America's greatest philosopher, says in his writings that all his works were created from the outset and all that he did was to still his mind on the Holy Presence, thinking of God and listening to the voice of the Spirit and then thoughts came into his mind, and he wrote them down. He refers to this procedure as listening to the primal warblings.

#### Supremacy of Spirit

When you realize the supremacy of the Spirit within you, that is the greatest

discovery in all the world. It is a greater discovery than all man's inventions. It is the greatest thing to realize that the Spirit within you is omnipotent and supreme. Actually, when you realize and meditate on this great truth, you will solve all problems. Know you are definitely guided, and right action will follow. Let your concept of God be love, beauty, infinite intelligence and boundless wisdom. If that is your concept of God, He will respond to you as a guide in your daily affairs, as right action, as health, as abundance, because that is what you believe about God. God responds according to the nature of your belief, for "it is done unto you as you believe."

#### Self-Reformation

What is war? War takes place in the mind of man first. If a man can get along with the thoughts in his own mind he can get along with his fellow-men. Man projects his own unconscious shortcomings and inferiority complexes on others. This is the cause of all wars. We have to change ourselves. There is no one to change, but ourselves. Everyone wants peace. I do, you do. We want to see a perfect world. Who does not? I can never see a perfect world until I myself become perfect. I want peace in the world, but I can never see it until I establish peace in my own heart. Only then can I bring peace to others who come within my orbit.

Man is what he assimilates mentally and spiritually. A man is what he thinks all day long, and his thoughts and feelings mould his destiny. What is thought? It is the power to select, to choose. There is affirmation and rejection for what we choose. To think therefore is to choose that which is noble and God like. If there is any worry, fear, or anxiety present, we are not truly thinking.

Modern Sufism does not, as the members of the old school, renounce the world. Certainly, self-discipline is practised, but the ideal is to live the spiritual life in the world, in contact with people, probing the depths of life and rising above them, as Inayat Khan says: "The way of the Sufi is to experience life and yet to remain above it, to live in the world and not let the world own him."

The symbol of the Sufi Movement is a heart with wings. In the heart is a crescent moon and a five-pointed star. The crescent moon represents the responsiveness of the crescent in the light of the sun. The five-pointed star represents the divine light, creation. So the meaning of the symbol can be expressed in these few words: "The heart which by its response has received the Divine Light, is liberated."

In conclusion, let me give two of the Sufi prayers, which so clearly and beautifully show the essence of Sufism as it has been brought out by Inayat Khan to the world of today:

## I

Praise be to Thee, most Supreme God,  
Omnipotent, Omnipresent,  
All-pervading, the Only Being  
Take us in Thy parental arms,  
Raise us from the darkness of the earth;  
Thy Beauty do we worship  
And to Thee do we give willing surrender.  
Most merciful and compassionate God,  
The idealized Lord of the whole humanity.  
Thee only do we worship,  
And towards Thee alone we aspire.  
Open our hearts towards Thy Beauty,  
Illuminate our souls with Divine Light.  
O Thou, the Perfection of Love,  
Harmony and Beauty,  
All-powerful Creator, Sustainer,  
Judge and Forgiver of our shortcomings,  
Lord God of the East and the West,  
Of the worlds above and below,

And of the seen and unseen beings,  
Pour upon us Thy Love and Thy Light,  
Give sustenance to our bodies, hearts  
and souls,  
Use us for the purpose that Thy wisdom  
chooseth  
And guide us on the path of Thine own  
goodness.  
Draw us closer to Thee every moment of  
our life,  
Until in us be reflected Thy grace,  
Thy glory, Thy wisdom,  
Thy joy and Thy peace  
Amen.

## II

Most gracious Lord, Master,  
Messiah and Saviour of humanity,  
We greet Thee with all humility.  
Thou art the First Cause and the Last Effect,  
The Divine Light and the Spirit of Guidance,  
Alpha and Omega of all.  
Thy Light is in all forms,  
Thy Love is in all beings—  
In a loving mother, in a kind father,  
In an innocent child, in a helpful friend and  
in an inspiring teacher.  
Allow us to recognize Thee  
In all Thy holy names and forms  
As Rama, as Krishna, as Shiva, as Buddha;  
Let us know Thee as Abraham,  
As Solomon, as Zarathustra,  
As Moses, as Jesus, as Mohammed  
And in many other names  
And forms, known and unknown to the  
world.  
We adore Thy past,  
Thy presence deeply enlightens our being,  
And we look for Thy blessing in the future,  
O Messenger, Christ, Nabi, the Resoul  
of God.  
Thou, whose heart constantly reaches  
upwards.  
Thou comest on earth with a Message,  
As a dove from above when Dharma  
decays,

If I do not cleanse my body, it will be dirty. If I do not cleanse my mind, it becomes dirty. So we must cleanse our mind through prayer. Prayer changes the subconscious mind. It wiped out all negative ideas lodged in the subconscious.

Get a new mental pattern, a mental vision, and you will go where your vision leads. Your outer world mirrors your inner world. Your new vision and new perception will wipe out all your old negative thoughts, and you will become blessed.

Amen.

## Modern Sufism

Srimati Manira van Voorst van Beest  
(Netherlands)

Sufism has always continued to exist since it had its flourishing time in the first centuries after the origin of Islam. In its modern form, Sufism has been brought to the Western world as a religious philosophy of love, harmony and beauty by Inayat Khan, grandson of the great Indian musician, Maula Bux. Inayat Khan was born in Baroda (India) in 1882, of a Mohammedan family. As a child he was educated in this religion. He was taught music by Maula Bux and later became a very good musician himself. At the age of 18 he made a tour through India and played even at the courts of several Rajas and Maharajas. More and more Inayat got interested in religion and in Hyderabad he came in contact with some Sufis and took part in their musical meetings. He found his Master and was initiated in the Sufi Order. Before passing away, the Master gave his blessings to Inayat and told him to leave India, to unite East and West by the harmony of his music and to spread the wisdom of Sufism. From 1910 till 1927 Inayat Khan visited the United States of America, and many European countries including Russia. He founded the Sufi Order in the West, which consists of the Universal Brotherhood, the Universal Worship (Sunday Service) and the Inner School.

The Sufi Message of Inayat Khan is embodied in the following ten thoughts.

1. There is one God, the Eternal, the Only Being; none exists save He.
2. There is One Master, the Guiding Spirit of all souls, who constantly leads His followers towards the Light.
3. There is one Holy Book, the Sacred Manuscript of Nature, the only Scripture which can enlighten the reader.
4. There is one Religion, the unswerving progress in the right direction towards the Ideal, which fulfills the life's purpose of every soul.
5. There is one Law, the Law of Reciprocity, which can be observed by a selfless conscience together with a sense of weakened justice.
6. There is one Brotherhood, the Human Brotherhood, which unites the children of earth indiscriminately in the Fetherhood of God.
7. There is one Moral, the Love, which springs forth from self denial and blooms in deeds of benevolence.
8. There is one Object of Praise, the Beauty, which uplifts the heart of its worshipper through all aspects from the Seen to the Unseen.
9. There is one Truth, the true knowledge of our Being, within and without, which is the essence of all wisdom.
10. There is one Path, the annihilation of the false ego in the Real, which raises the mortal to immortality, in which resides self perfection.

# 'Renunciation' in Jainism

Sri Jyoti Prasad Jai  
(Agra)

It is not wholly untrue to say that too much emphasis is laid on renunciation or Vairagya in Jainism, and in a fit of renunciation many neglect to perform their duties of social life (spectically in the case of minors), and that to cut off oneself away from social obligations and duties is found to be an approved practice in Jaina Society. The present perverted forms of renunciation as is visible in several persons who pass for true Jaina monks and from the literature commented or translated or written by them from their own sectarians and one-sided standpoint, are responsible for creating a misunderstanding about this great Truth of life according to the Jaina concept. The true Jaina canons are the unwritten codes of practical life readable or realizable from the practical life of a living perfect being or Arhat. The old written canons however are in the Sotras (hymns) form, in the form of suggestions and indications for practical conduct in life. It is not like craftsmanship but practical and real engineering.

By renunciation or Vairagya, in fact, Jainism does never mean renunciation of the active and practical life or of the honestly earned and acquired possessions, wealth and means, or of social life and the fulfillment of social obligations and performances of social duties. By renunciation Jainism also does never mean to be anti-physical or intent on mortifying the human powers and faculties. Contrarily it has recommended the active and social nature of human feelings and the necessity of society with the fulfillment of its obligations on the path of self-development. It also teaches one to be alert and to make proper use of the sensations and

worldly gifts and means for the sake of self-development or liberation. In order to be able to make proper use of these gifts one has been advised to become the master and controller of the mind, senses and passions and not to be their slave. Great, perhaps the greatest importance has been given to developing and maintaining physical fitness, mental and intellectual ability, illumination and moral purity. The latter is surely a matter of sound relationship and it naturally requires one to be living conducting oneself and behaving in accordance with the universal principle of self-restraint 'to live and let live,' etc., without which no social life or any life is possible. Through this social path the Jaina seers, after their own experience, have also found a path of self-development or enlightenment of soul, which techniques is a highly logical and scientific one. Renouncing of worldly gifts altogether to the last phase of spiritual development is like giving up the one pair of spectacles whose eye-sight is regained or leaving the car or a railway compartment when one has reached one's destination.

## Concept of Mind

In Uttaradhyayana Sutra, Manas—mind or heart—with all its concentrating, thinking or feeling faculties embodied is compared to a horse and the imperfect and mundane soul to a layman-rider over it, whose goal of life is to reach home or spherification with the help of the horse and without which covering the journey or achieving the goal is not possible. The soul is therefore advised to be trained and disciplined enough to be the master of the horse in order to be able to achieve the goal of life—in liberation with the

And speakest tho Word that is put into  
 Thy mouth  
 As the light filleth the crescent moon.  
 May the Star of Divine Light,  
 Shining in Thy heart, be reflected  
 In the hearts of Thy devotees,

May the Message of God reach far and wide,  
 Illuminating and making the whole  
 humanity  
 One single Brotherhood in the Fatherhood  
 of God  
 Amen

## A Message to the World

Sati Godavari Bai

(Upasani Mahoraj Ashram, Sotara)

God, being Omnipresent, pervades every human being. Therefore to show hatred towards or fight with or plan to kill any human or living being, community or nation are all, in fact, nothing else than an act against God, our real Self. If every nation were to succeed in inculcating this abiding truth into the hearts of its people it would be found that this is the easiest and most effective measure to eradicate war from the face of this world for ever and restore Peace, Plenty and Prosperity all round.

Every home, school, college and University should endeavour hard to spread this truth far and wide. Steps should be taken to put into practice this truth and in the

light of the following prayer

"O God, do shower Thy benign mercy and grace on every Being in this world and help us all and grant us the strength to recognize the sublime truth that it is Thou and Thou alone who pervades the whole universe and that we are all Thy children who are out to spread everlasting peace on the face of this earth."

"Oh Lord of lords, and God of gods! Do, therefore, in Thy infinite mercy and grace, help us and guide us all in the very right direction and lead us from the unreal to the real, from darkness to light eternal and from death to immortality."

"May peace, everlasting peace, be spread in this world! Amen!"

### ETHICAL CULTURE

Conduct is behaviour. Deportment, carriage, demeanour, conduct and behaviour are synonymous terms. The way in which rational beings should behave towards each other as well as towards other creatures is dealt with in the science of morals or ethics.

To speak the truth to practice Ahimsa, not to hurt the feelings of others in thought, word and deed, not to speak harsh words to any one, not to show any anger towards anybody, not to abuse others or speak ill of others and to see God in all beings is Sadachara. If you abuse anyone, if you hurt the feelings of others really you are abusing yourself and hurting the feelings of God only. Himsa (injuring) is a deadly enemy of Bhakti and Jnana. It separates and divides. It stands in the way of realizing oneness or oneness in Self.

—Swami Sivananda

# 'Renunciation' in Jainism

Sri Jyoti Prasad Jain  
(Agia)

It is not wholly untrue to say that too much emphasis is laid on renunciation or Vratya in Jainism, and in a fit of renunciation many neglect to perform their duties of social life (specially in the case of minors) and that to cut off oneself away from social obligations and duties is found to be an approved practice in Jaina Society. The present perverted forms of renunciation as is visible in several persons who pass for true Jaina monks and from the literature commented or translated or written by them from their own sectarian and one-sided standpoint, are responsible for creating a misunderstanding about this great Truth of life according to the Jaina concept. The true Jaina canons are the unwritten codes of practical life readable or realizable from the practical life of a living perfect being or Arhat. The old written canons however are in the Sutras (brief) form, in the form of suggestions and indications for practical conduct in life. It is not like draftsmanship but practical and real engineering.

By renunciation or Vratya, in fact, Jainism does never mean renunciation of the active and practical life or of the honestly earned and acquired possessions wealth and means, or of social life and the fulfillment of social obligations and performances of social duties. By renunciation Jainism also does never mean to be anti physical or intent on mortifying the human powers and faculties. Contrarily it has recommended the active and social nature of human beings and the necessity of society with the fulfillment of its obligations on the path of self-development. It also teaches one to be able and to make proper use of the sensuous and

worldly gifts and means for the sake of self development or liberation. In order to be able to make proper use of these gifts one has been advised to become the master and controller of the mind, senses and passions and not to be their slave. Great, perhaps the greatest importance has been given to developing and maintaining physical fitness, mental and intellectual ability, illumination and moral purity. The latter is purely a matter of sound relationship and it naturally requires one to be living conducting oneself and behaving in accordance with the universal principle of self-restraint 'to live and let live' etc., without which no social life or any life is possible. Through this social path the Jain seers, after their own experience, have also found a path of self development or enlightenment of soul which technique is a highly logical and scientific one. Renouncing of worldly gifts altogether in the last phase of spiritual development is like giving up the one pair of spectacles when eye sight is regained or leaving the car or a railway compartment when one has reached one's destination.

## Concept of Mind

In Uttaradhyayana Sutra Manas—mind or heart—with all its concentrating, thinking or feeling faculties embodied is compared to a horse and the imperfect and mundane soul to a layman-rider over it whose goal at life is to reach home or liberation with the help of the horse and without which covering the journey or achieving the goal is not possible. The soul is therefore advised to be trained and disciplined enough to be the master of the horse in order to be able to achieve the goal of life to obtain liberation with the

help of the horse. After the soul has reached its destination its bidding goodbye to the horse and to all equipments is most natural and it does never mean the soul's indifference to them in life. When the soul has achieved its perfection or own attributes of perfection, the knowledge with the removal of the causes of obstructing the realization of its own attributes, why should it thereafter care for the material or the foreign elements, which serve no better purpose than its own attributes and be anxious about the material Manas?

Manas according to Jainism is a material substance and is named as Dravya Moola (or substantial mind). It gains consciousness temporarily so long as it is in touch with the soul, one of whose main tributaries is consciousness, just as a lump of fire becomes a red-hot fire-lump by its constant touch with fire and works like fire. Yet it does not lose its own wonderful properties. If the rider is weak and untrained and the horse or the Moola is uncontrollable by the soul or the rider it will naturally be attracted by the worldly scenes and instead of going towards the rider's destination it will pass the whole time of the soul's useless worldly pursuits. Besides the Dravya Moolas (substantial mind) the soul's two thinking, meditating and thinking faculty is said to be the Bhava Moolas or the qualitative mind. The formation or the relation of the two minds in the human garb and the necessity of keeping them alive and cultivated and the way how to do it is a unique and vast description in Jainism. This is the most essential organ on the path of salvation.

#### Human Relationship

Thus under the principle of renoncement Jainism presents a picture of knowledge of facts with regard to the Self and non-Self substances to be embodied and pure

forms and the source of all gifts worldly and Self with their interrelationship or interdependence on the path of purity. This true picture of Self and non-self thus represented naturally awakes the soul's right belief, creates its right attitude of the mind and a strong will and determination to work for Self-realization by working on the prescribed ethical principles, to achieve its end of life. Jainism under this principle presents the whole picture of life and of human relationships in brief as under:

1. That worldly gifts are apparently transitory and fruitless and the so-called charm or happiness in the worldly gifts is lost as soon as the gift is achieved.

2. That even after the hardest toil, achievement of the worldly gift is not certain and even if achieved, the realization of happiness is not guaranteed.

3. That the spiritual gifts are the source of real and lasting happiness and any amount of work done for its attainment does never go waste. Success is assured with the endeavours made in this direction and the realization of joy and happiness is also guaranteed after the attainment of spiritual gifts.

4. That human life is an opportunity to achieve Liberation and Self-realization and all necessary efforts must be made on the path of liberation.

5. That the world is not a house but it is an inn on our way home.

6. That the achievement of goal is possible by self-help and not by mercy of any God or Goddess.

7. That proper cultivation of the mind and mastery over all sensual faculties and passions are the first essentials on the path of liberation.

8. That to be active is the soul's desire which attribute should be deve-

loped and utilized for the above real purpose of life.

9. That all works in human life if done with a sense of non-violence, truth, restraint, sacrifice and non-attachment to action or its result, can lead to liberation of the soul, etc., etc.

### Process of Evolution

Thus the formation of the above attitude of mind and preparedness for the travel is the true renunciation of animal natures and useless pursuits. On and on, on the path of spiritual development or liberation, simplification of wants is the most natural trait of one's character. To travel and to travel as much as possible and to be unattached to the furnishing or gifts provided to the ion on the way house is also the most natural desire of an aspirant soul, who is fully saturated in the true sense of renunciation according to Jainism. Naturally as he is on the path, the aspirant will be seen to be unmindful of worldly achievements and relationships. But he is mindful of something higher. The mind is being more and more developed and awakened but is concentrated on the goal or the real wealth which is the source of real and permanent joy and happiness.

Thus renunciation in Jainism is not a particular aspect of life, but the whole life, and by giving up his worldly riches and passions arising through the soul's connection with matter and its effect over the soul, the aspirant, like a wise businessman, is bartering the lesser wealths with the spiritual wealths of eternal nature. Initiation into the monk's life is not the only criterion of renunciation. The householder's life and the monk's life are the two different phases or paths of life leading to the same goal at the traveller in the Eternal. The only difference in the two paths is that the householder's life is a long and circuitous route while that of a

monk is a short-cut to perfection. Even a monk's life is a social life, too. But, in fact, his is a supersocial life. Even the monks in their living of the principles of non-violence, truth, justice, service, sacrifice, etc., do not do any act which is discarded by society or held as a crime or illegal by law.

### Interdependence

The true sense of initiation to monk's life on the so-called renunciation of the family or the householder's life is that by such a cultivation the aspirant has made all living beings his family members. Just as he was charitable and good enough to be spending his honestly earned wealths in his householder's life, so he is now sharing all his earnings of spiritual wealth in monk's life with all human beings who are hankering after true happiness and the source of permanent joy which he is achieving or has achieved. In return to his great giving the monk also gets the bare necessities of life, food, drink, etc., from the householder, howsoever the monk is desiring to get rid of them also. Thus whether one is a householder or a monk, social relationship and interdependence in every life and sphere has been recognized and the essential peace and harmony of each life and each sphere of life is essentially maintained for which a code of life is prescribed by the experienced Jaina seers. This point of renunciation can be better understood taking in view the life of some Jaina seers or any practical great soul.

### Mahavira

Taking the case of Lord Mahavira, the last Tirthankars, who was highly gifted, extraordinarily wise, thoughtful and rational and fully alive to his aim of life and endowed with all faculties in development and attainments abdicated from his very boyhood for practical working on the

path of his salvation. Instead of renouncing, in his household boyhood, as the dramatic scenes are seen today he lived in household and society and derived all advantages desirable therefrom till he reached a matured age. Even when he was anxious to adopt a monk's life he gave up the idea for some time of seeing his parents highly anxious and aggrieved on account of that desire of his. He took active part in all family's and society's activities and functions, lived in his own way and made his contributions to his family's and society's life by his practical living on the principles of non-violence, truth and righteousses, etc.

He removed then the existing superstition in society by his not observing the bloody rituals, by not participating in the so-called perverted religious rituals and functions. He took part in all social and religious activities and by living and conducting in his own way he pruduced courage and changed the outlook of many. Even when his parents died he did not renounce his dukedom and family on the request of his elder brother and stayed for about two years more in householder's life and by his living he opened a new vista of right understanding and judgement and created a stir against the evil practices then existing in society. After seeing his noble and highly detached life and realizing the greatness of his soul, his brother

willingly allowed him to adopt the monk's life for which his soul was hankering for its complete purification within that very lifetime. He thus renounced his dukedom, household and all riches as one throws away straw and preserves only wheat. He did not renounce these so-called rare riches in emotion or in the night time, but before all relations and friends and in the day. After a hard struggle for about twelve years in his monk's life, he at last gained complete victory over all material limitations and passions and by reviving his own attributes in him, he became a pure liberated perfect soul—a true religion or religions cannn personified. Even when he thus became a great victor or Jina, social relationship was not altogether broken. He spent the rest of his life in showing the true path of salvation to the human beings, who were hankering for it. This is the true rule of renunciation.

Thus renunciation is not one aspect of life at initiation into a monk's life only, but the whole life, it is not a show but a spiritual detached living, highly active and social. It is the right inclination, capacity, fitness of the soul for the highly disciplined and strenuous life with complete control over all the animal instincts. Renunciation or Vairagya is a life-long process of super-living, and ultimate victory of Self over non-self.

#### DISCIPLINE

Discipline is the training of our faculties through instructions and through exercise, in accordance with some settled principle of authority. You must discipline not only the intellect but also the will and the emotion. A disciplined man will control his actions. He is no longer at the mercy of the dominant idea of the moment. He ceases to be a slave of his impulses and indriyas. Such mastery is not the result of one day's effort. One can acquire the power by protracted practice and daily self-discipline. You must learn to refuse the commands of the impulses. A self-controlled man will be able to resist the wrong action to which a worldly man is most strongly impelled.

—Swami Sivananda

Chapter Seventeen

RELIGION OF SIVANANDA

# Religion of Sivananda

## INTRODUCTORY

### I. What is Religion

Religion is a pathway to peace and  
Brotherhood.  
Religion shows the way to God-realiza-  
tion  
Religion is a bond between God and  
man.

Religion has the tremendous force of  
transforming character.  
Religion is better understood when it is  
more and more practised  
Without religion there can be no morality  
or spirituality  
A life without religion is a dreary waste  
and death.  
Education without religion is not worth  
the name.

### II. The One Religion

There is only one religion, the religion  
of Love.  
There is only one religion, the religion  
of the heart.  
There is only one religion, the religion  
of Vedanta  
There is only one religion, the religion  
of unity or oneness.

### III. Real Religion

Real religion is above mind and senses.  
Real religion is Self-realization.  
The essence of religion is divine  
experience.  
The essence of religion is love and unity.

### IV. Unity in Diversity

Brahman, Allah, Krishna, Khuds, Ahn-  
Mazds.

Jehovah, Shinto, Tao, Buddha, Zoroaster,  
Jesus Christ, Mahavir, Confucius—  
All are essentially one and the same.  
*Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti*—  
Truth is one, sages call it by different  
names

### V. Universal Teachings

The universal religious teachings are—  
Serve, love, give, purify, meditate, realize;  
Be good, do good, be kind, be com-  
passionate,  
Enquire "Who am I ?," know the Self,  
and be free;  
Love all, serve all, serve the Lord in all,  
Speak the truth, be pure, be humble;  
Concentrate, meditate, attain Self,  
realization:  
These are the essentials of all religions.  
Customs, conventions, ceremonies are  
non-essentials.  
Do not fight over petty non-essentials.  
Prayer, fasting, charity and pilgrimage  
Are the first steps in all religions.  
Be tolerant, be catholic, have a broad  
outlook,  
Respect all prophets, all saints, all  
messengers  
All saints speak the same language.

### VI. Ram or Raheem

Ram or Raheem is the same for me.  
Krishna or Karim is the same for me.  
God or Allah has no difference to me.  
Ahur Mazda or Jehovah I consider the  
same.  
I accept and respect all saints and prophets.  
I respect all gurus, pirs and friars.  
I find the underlying truth in all religions.

## VII. My Creed

God is my creed  
 Cosmic love is my creed  
 Selfless service is my creed  
 Brotherhood is my creed  
 Sacrifice and renunciation are my creed  
 Fellowship and unity are my creed  
 Equal vision and equanimity are my creed  
 Worship of Truth is my creed

I serve all love all, mix with all  
 And see the Lord in all  
 I stick to my promises  
 I serve the poor, this is my delight  
 I do mental prostrations even to asses  
 Dogs trees bricks stones and all  
 that exists  
 I respect elders and Ssadhuis I obey  
 My religious convictions  
 Which always find expression through  
 my actions

## VIII Hoist the Flag of Dharma

I have no dogmas and no sectarian creed  
 I teach the Way of Life Divine—  
 The art of Living in a righteous manner  
 Beat the drum of Dharma, or the Life Divine  
 Hoist the flag of Dharma or the Life Divine  
 Blow the conch of Dharma or the Life  
 Divine  
 Enter the illimitable domain of Bliss  
 Eternal

## XI Qualifications of a Religious Man

I am a strange mixture of service devotion, Yoga and Jnana  
 I practise and advocate the 'Yoga of  
 Synthesis'  
 I practise Ahimsa Satyam and  
 Brahmacarya  
 (Truth non injury and purity)  
 I love nature, music art poetry,  
 Philosophy beauty, goodness solids  
 Meditation Yoga and Vedanta  
 Through these religion is revealed  
 I am humble and simple  
 I am frank and straightforward  
 I am perfectly tolerant and catholic  
 I am merciful and sympathetic  
 I have spontaneous and unrestrained  
 generosity  
 I am bold and cheerful  
 I am immensely patient  
 I can bear insult and injury  
 I am forgiving and hear on till will  
 I am free from vindictive nature  
 I return good for evil  
 I serve with joy the man who has  
 injured me

I expect these traits in every religion  
 He who possesses these qualities  
 Is a man of religion

## IX Religious Ideals

To raise the fallen, to lead the blind  
 To share what I have with others  
 To bring solace to the stricken  
 To cheer up the suffering —  
 Are my religious ideals  
 To have perfect faith in God,  
 To love my neighbours as my own Self,  
 To love God with all my heart and soul,  
 To protect animals women and children —  
 Are my religious aims  
 My watchword is Love  
 The Religion of love  
 Is my practical Religion

## X Equal Vision

I sing the name of all saints of all  
 religions  
 I respect all cults, faiths and creeds

## WHAT IS RELIGION ?

Religion is the same given to one's attitude of life, based on the consciousness of the nature of one's relation to God or Over-soul. Religion is also, otherwise, called the attitude of life towards matter and spirit.

God is the deepest truth of the universe, and truth is one. Therefore the axis of religion is essentially one and the same.

Religion presupposes a fundamental Existence be it God Consciousness, or Atma.

The cosmic process of creation and dissolution through its scenes of appearance and disappearance is the changing colours of life and death, drives home to mankind the lesson that this life is only an act in the process of becoming, where many parts are played by various individual entities and yet no part by itself is complete and capable of giving the character of wholeness to this cosmic process.

Religion is the means that binds man to the cosmic whole and shows that he is a part of the whole, trying to abide by the law of the whole and aiming at the fulfilment of the common purpose of the constituents of the whole.

Self-realization is the ultimate goal of religion all the rest is only a preparation.

Religion indicates that which has a

practical bearing. It is assiduous spiritual practice for evolution. Mere ideological belief without a practical effort is no religion at all.

True, adherence to a particular creed or dogma can also be called practice of religion but if it does not lead to harmonious self-development and realization of God, its purpose is fruitless.

Religion is formed into various practical modes which differ in accordance with the psychological constituents and the traditional and the cultural background of the individual. Yet religion cannot merely be a set of opinions, dogmas and rituals but life is the Eternal as its basic perspective. This perspective translated into practice leads one to the attainment of divine consciousness, free from all limitations and imperfections.

Simple and practical religion is a life of righteousness, goodness, purity and selfless service. The pivot of religion is Truth or the Law of Eternal Virtue. Its precepts are Be good Do good Be kind Be pure Be compassionate Love all. Serve all See God in all. Such religion alone can awaken man to the consciousness of the unity of all existence and the realization of the Immanent Spirit here and now.

## WHENCE AND WHERE TO

What are we? What were we? What shall we be? Were we before our birth? Shall we be after death? What happens to us after death?" This is the eternal question अस्तोये न यमताये (Katha, 1-1 20) It is only a wise man who will try to pursue this question till he comes to a conclusion. It is only he who thrashes out the question till it yields its fruits. The fool will never attempt at a solution or he will abandon

the enquiry before reaching a conclusion. Without a knowledge of what we were and what we are going to be we can't think of a method of putting ourselves where we ought to be transplant ourselves from where we are to where we should be or we would like to be.

The Upanishads and the Gita give of a clear idea of the answer to our question, नामको विद्यने भावो नाभावो विद्यने सत् The natural

never is. The real never is not. This leads you to the conclusion that the Real (Brahman) exists always. The first quality of Atma is immortality. It is unchangeable. You can never change it. Only the forms of matter change, but the elements of which they are composed can never change. You can break a mud-pot, but the mud, of which the pot was made, is still there. It is the same fundamental elements that are made to appear as different in diverse forms. These elements are indestructible. The rock is a substance from which the sculptor carves out the image of an idol. You cannot say he has created the image all by himself. It was already there in the rock. The sculptor only removes the extra rock substance and the image is the product. The very word *srishiti* has a peculiar meaning in Sanskrit. It comes from the root *vishrj*—to project. All that we see around is only a projection of Brahman. You can never create something out of nothing. The Atma has been in existence and will continue to exist after the destruction of the body. All that has happened was behind the screen before birth and it has been brought on the stage of this life. Merely because you don't see the actors behind the screen in a drama, you can't deny their existence. This *srishiti* is also like bringing the actors on to the stage from behind the screen.

You do not come into the world in total forgetfulness and in utter darkness. You are born with certain memories and habits acquired in the unknown Past. Desires take their origin from previous experiences. We find that none is born without

desire. Every being is born with some desires, which are associated with the conditions of one's past existence. The desire proves the existence of one's soul in the previous conditions of embodiment.

Again, we never say 'I die,' 'I have died.' When we use this word 'I' the particular one we have in view is the *jivatma*. In dream you see your dead body. You are then a *sakshi*, a detached witness. You are still alive, though you see your own dead body.

Life is the *svabhava* of the 'I.' So the question 'why' is never asked of life. We do not ask "Why is water cold?" We do not ask "Why is the fire hot?" The 'why' is always asked when it is not the *svabhava*—of whatever is unnatural.

All that is unnatural is impermanent and unreal. Your real nature is immortality. You are suffering because you think otherwise and identify yourself with the body. A fish had accidentally jumped out of the water and was struggling. A merciful gentleman took pity on it and carried it home, put it on a warm bed, bathed it, massaged it, in fact provided it with all the comforts he could afford. But it was still struggling. He later threw it back into the water and it instantly began to swim happily. Your case is just like this. You suffer because your lower consciousness has lost the sight of your higher consciousness. You will be happy again as soon as you realize your real nature, the nature of Atman, which is—

ज्ञानं निष्य गत्वा तेऽयं पुराणो  
न इन्द्रं हन्यमानं गतोः

## RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

Religion is not divorced from philosophical wisdom, nor is it alien to the spiritual science of the Self. If the Self is an established fact, and the knowledge of it

is true the way to it also is true and established. This established way is religion.

When religions are founded on non-essentials, on classes, climates, sentiments,

idiosyncrasies and the practical needs of a particular society, of a limited part of humanity, they are bound to be cut off from each other. But, when it is known that man is not merely a body, that his ultimate demands are not peculiar to his personality alone, that the essential calls of the inner reality are similar to those in others, too, it will be found that the views of life cannot basically diverse and that, if all aim at a common experience of reality and perfection, their conduct in life can only be a preparation for that Supreme Experience-Whole. This preparation is the religious life, though it may have many appellations and may pass through the moulds of temperamental peculiarities.

Let it not be thought that religion is a dogmatic, other-worldly, pet tradition of believers or irrational emotionalism. Religion is the most rational science of life itself, which no one can gainsay, the substance of man as he essentially is, not merely as he presumes himself to be. Religion is the way to the realization of the highest perfection. If perfection is a possibility, religion is real and it is the only method fulfilling the human ideal.

Man can never live without God for God is the Whole and man is only a part. Man's religion puts him in consonance with Truth. Religion is the form taken by the relation that is between man and God, the link between the lower and the higher nature in oneself. Mao's own Higher Nature is God, his essence is the Real,

his existence is universal and immortal. Religion is the way spiritual, the way to God. Religious life is spiritual life, a religious man is a spiritual man, for it is not possible to be religious without reverencing the Spirit that is one.

Philosophy has its root in the practical needs of man. Man wants to know about transcendental matters when he is in a reflective mood. There is an urge within him to know about the secret of death, the secret of immortality, the nature of the Soul, of the Creator, and of the world. Philosophy helps him to know all these. Philosophy is the self-expression of the growing spirit of man.

Philosophy is the rational aspect of religion. It is an integral part of religion. It is a rational inquiry into the nature of Reality. It gives clear solution to get rid of pain and death and attain immortality and eternal bliss.

Religion and philosophy are two sisters, the relationship between them is very intimate. Most of the problems of philosophy are the problems of religion. While philosophy struggles to gain an intellectual understanding of the real nature of world, of man and of God, religion dynamically experiences the very Essence of all Existence. Philosophy is man's mental movement towards God or Truth or Reality, and religion is the movement of his heart and soul towards the same goal. Philosophy knows God, religion lives and moves in God. Philosophy is forever searching, inquiring, questioning, religion is sensing, realizing, experiencing.

## INADEQUACY OF ATHEISTIC BELIEFS

Religion presupposes belief, faith, conviction. No one can be irreligious in the ultimate analysis. Even the non believer believes in his own belief. Even the denier of God accepts the existence of the daoer in himself. The question is how-

ever, whether this type of attitude can meet the needs of the soul, of one's emotions, of the hunger of the spirit. Atheism or the naturalistic religion is a substantial belief. Nature is considered to be all-in-all. She is the mother

and man is the son Religion therefore according to this view, is the relation between unconscious nature and conscious man. Bertrand Russell said that it is a wonder how the mother who is unconscious, i.e., Nature, has produced a son i.e., man who is conscious. It is not a wonder, it is a misconception. Because, nature is not unconscious, though we may accept that man is produced by nature. If nature is unconscious man also would be unconscious. That means the universe would be blind. There would be no aspiration whatsoever. There would be no attitude at all because there is no consciousness. The naturalistic religion which is synonymous with atheism, because it denies the existence of God altogether, is a very poor substitute for what we mean by real religion. Man cannot get on for ever with this attitude. When the body is healthy, when the circumstances are good, when there is no difficulty whatsoever in life, apparently man with an audacity tries to deny the existence of a supernatural Power. But it is said that suffering is the basis of religion. It is the precondition of all true knowledge. Unless one comes to the consciousness of certain inadequacy in the conditions of life, unless he finds that something is wanting in his consciousness. In his experience he will not reach God. His consciousness would not stretch towards God.

But this kind of aspiration towards the ideal which is not the actual has been denied by another view of life which is called agnosticism. It is the brother of atheism. It is a kind of religion of certain people. They say that truth cannot be known. God cannot be known—He is not and can never be known. There may be God—the agnostic does not deny God—but he says religion is only an ideal which can never be realized. If religion

is the relation of man to God and if God cannot be realized then religion is phantasm. But this position of the agnostic is untenable from the very face of it. He says that Truth is not known. He is better than the atheist or the naturalist in this respect at least that he grants that there may be Truth—and there is a Truth—but his only contention is that it cannot be known, so, religion is futile. Why is this view untenable? Because it is illogical. When the agnostic accepts that there may be a Truth, he implies in his statement the possibility of knowing the Truth.

We cannot be conscious of a fact which is not contained in our consciousness. That which is outside our consciousness is not ours and we cannot speak about it, cannot think of it, can never have any relation to it. What is Truth? Truth is that which is perfect. It is complete. It is without the difficulties and imperfections and the wants and the inadequate conditions of life. That is Truth. It may not be possible to know it. Does it exist? We do not know. That is the answer of the agnostic. When we are conscious of our finitude we are at the same time conscious of the existence of an infinitude. We cannot know the existence of a boundary unless we know that there is something beyond the boundary. We cannot know that we are suffering unless we know that there is a possibility of having another experience which is different from suffering. We cannot know that we are mortal unless there is some state which is immortal. We cannot know that we are men unless we know that there are others like us and different from us. Therefore the implications of agnosticism cannot overstep religion though from the outside it appears to be a mistake that there are others who say that we need not have such a difficulty at all.

Agnosticism may be wrong; but religion is equally wrong. Why? We see that the agnostic is confined to the superfluous experience of life; and, because he does not admit the consciousness of something which exists, he is not correct. We say that the religionist, who professes to be conscious of a direct relation between himself and what eternally exists also is equally incorrect. There is an antithesis to every thesis. We can prove anything; and disprove anything—that is the nature of the intellect, because the basis of the intellect is duality, and incomplete knowledge.

This leads to another view of life called scepticism. Everything is doubted. God is doubted; the nature of this world is doubted; experience itself is doubted. Our life ends in doubting! This is another substitute for religion. We do not know

what is really right and what is really wrong. With this attitude how long can we live in this world? Evidently, there is one error in this statement of the sceptic. It is a spacious argument. He doubts everything; but he does not doubt his own position. He is confident that what he thinks is true. Though he calls himself a sceptic, he is not sceptic about his own position. He goes beyond scepticism when he asserts that scepticism is the perfect substitute for religion. If that also is doubted, we will be mad. Truly there is a doughter. He is the basis of religions. He is eternally conscious of himself. That doughter cannot be dispensed with as an unconscious heling, because what is unconscious cannot even doubt. Therefore, scepticism, too, is a feeble and completely unsatisfactory substitute for religion.

## EPITOME OF RELIGION

In this world of phenomena, the general rule is that the subtle is veiled or covered over the gross. The truth or the inner essence of anything is hidden by its outward appearance. The latter is hidden by *nama* and *rupa*. To perceive the inner truth the underlying essence, you will have to combine observation with discrimination and impartial enquiry. If you fail to do this you will get but a superficial glimpse of things and miss the substance thereof. Religion is no exception to this rule. The real import is not properly understood by a great many. Precisely because of the above-mentioned reason. The sincere inquiry into the true implication of religion is conspicuous by its absence! Thus religion from being rightly understood in its true light as the greatest common factor and universally unifying force in the world, has come to be mis-

understood and misconstrued as a disruptive element that is at the bottom of many a quarrel, conflict and warfare, too. Many would readily quote history, remote as well as recent, to support this opinion. The term universality with reference to religion will perhaps evoke a sceptic smile in many. But such scepticism is ridiculous, for, they err in the same way as a man seeing a coloured electric bulb takes the external coloured glass to be the real light and fails to perceive the pure colorless light within.

Universality is the greatest characteristic of true religion. This fact is not effected by the voice or opinion of the non-discriminating man. When I say true religion I mean religion in its pure essentials and not its conventional cocaptions. The reality of religion does not lie in the rituals, external marks or traditional char-

vetions, nor in the personal apparel and social customs adopted by the followers of particular aspects of religious life. These are but its ever changeable surface appendages. But a little reflection and inquiry will reveal to us the unmistakable truth that religion is the root impulse in the heart of every human being. At its best, religion constitutes the primal spiritual urge to self-awareness. This principle throbs in the heart of all.

Everyone has a positive and a negative side of one's nature which express themselves in the individual's aptitudes and outward behaviour. The process of religion is to enable one to overcome his negative instincts with the help of the hidden positive traits that are present in every human being.

The process of self-culture ensures a growing understanding that one is, in essence, what everything else is, and that everything else is but a repetition, ad infinitum, of what one is within oneself. This process unfolds itself first by being truthful, humble, pure, compassionate, dispassionate, forgiving, tolerant, unselfish, generous and charitable. It means leading the divine life which should be free from lust, greed, anger, hatred, jealousy, pride, egoism, hypocrisy, and all that are negative and base.

Religion is a relation, a conscious relation, between man and his Oversoul. It is this aspiration to know one's own Oversoul that determines the characteristic of religion. If there is one Truth, religion can be one only, though there may be many phases of it. In practical life, however, we can never have one religion. Temperaments of men differ. All people do not think in the same way. Though all are human beings, they think in different ways. They are brought up in different conditions. Their conceptions are different

even from birth. Therefore, it will be very difficult to break down the compartmental disposition of religion.

We must develop toleration. That is the thing essential in life. We may know that there is one religion, but with this basis we must develop toleration. We must consider all as brothers. Universal brotherhood may be developed on the basis of universal Selfhood. Unless we accept universal Selfhood, we cannot have universal brotherhood. All social relations should have some supersocial facts as basis, otherwise we can never have happiness.

We must always have a supreme background on which to rest. The ideal never remains an ideal eternally. It can be realized. If an ideal is something which cannot be realized at all, it cannot be contained in our consciousness. The fact that we are able to conceive of perfection shows that there is perfection. The fact that there is some urge in us to become infinite shows that it is possible for us to become infinite. The fact that we fear death shows that we are immortal. The fact that we aspire for unlimited consciousness shows that we can realize unlimited consciousness. This consciousness can be realized by living the universal religion. This religion is the religion of God or Truth, which manifests itself in different human beings in different ways. We have got various religions—not merely Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, etc.—each man has got a religion of his own. Each society has got a view of life which it cherishes. Different sections of life have different forms of religion. But, as parts are united to a whole, all these aspects of religion should be united to a common religion.

Religion is not merely a view, nor

merely an ideal, not merely a conception, but is the way of right action. It should be permeated by the consciousness of the One God. If you do not like the word 'God', you may use some other. But this fact must be accepted: there is one Reality, Truth, which is immortal, which never dies, which every man should accept if he is sane, because it is impossible to conceive of absolute non-existence, absolute change apart of this Supreme Reality. It exists, because we exist. The fact that I exist shows that God exists. This is a fact, as the philosopher Descartes said. I have got a consciousness of perfection, infinitude. Wherefrom has that consciousness come to me? It came from Me. I exist. Existence is a fact. Therefore infinitude must exist, and it must be intelligent. With this consciousness we must adjust ourselves, our social life, individual life, national life—on the basis of this infinite consciousness for which we all aspire.

It is the very antithesis of the spirit of religion to look into the faults of other people's religions with a vilifying attitude. It is crudely irresponsible to say: "My religion is perfect; my religion has more intuitive principles; my religion is immensely practical." All these partisan notions foster discord and misunderstanding. All religions have come from God, every religion is good. That is all you need be dogmatic about. There is no harm in such dogmatism.

The negative traits in the human nature are difficult to eradicate; but ceaseless persevering efforts assure the victory. In the beginning the mind will revolt; the senses will rebel. One has to conquer the negative through continuous attempts at strengthening the positive.

If one wishes to get established in harmlessness, one must be patient, one must go on practising patience, without having

to encourage wickedness, or at the cost of discrediting one's basic human dignity. Patience is a glorious virtue; similarly, too, are selflessness, purity, truthfulness, catholicity, generosity and love. One must practise these with commonsense, i.e., speak the truth without having to divulge other people's secrets, be generous without having to deprive one's dependents of their basic needs, be selfless without having to demand the same amount of selflessness from others, love others without having to make oneself cheap or contemptible, practise detachment without being negligent and callous, and cultivate the spirit of renunciation without being irresponsible and irreverent to one's duties.

Ultimately, ethical culture is the criterion of religious progress. One who is not ethically perfect can never be a realized soul. No religious principle that is contrary to ethics is God-given or God-inspired. The creed that instigates proselytization through unfair means or through violence or with political strings attached is the very antithesis to true religion. The religious principle that manipulates on fear-complex is primitive and undesirable. Lure of heaven and fear of eternal damnation to hell fail to inspire the rational mind. To fear God is quite an undesirable epithet still exhorted by many major religions. One who fears God cannot have genuine devotion or a tender loving attitude towards Him. Some apologists say that the child loves its parents and yet fears their punishment, and so is the case with man and God. True, all children begin with loving their parents, but if the parents believe in punishing their children instead of weaning them away from their mistakes by understanding, protective essence, and judicious guidance, such children, in their adulthood, usually end up in hating their

parents. So also is the case with our attitude towards God. If we base our relationship with God on unfixed love and devotion, irrespective of our suffering or temporal happiness, that will be much more enduring.

Love of God is the most fundamental principle of religion. It annihilates all limitations and differentiations. It flows perennially towards the entire creation, even as the sun shines equally upon all. It is a potent remedy to cure the disease of fear and hatred. This pure Love is an

irresistible force. To him whose heart is filled with pure love, the voice of his conscience is the voice of God. He engages himself in alleviating the suffering of others. His is an ideal of selfless service. The Lord's will flows through him. He is ever joyful and never afraid. He brings peace and harmony in the lives of all he comes across. The basis of lasting unity of all humanity is the religion of pure love. This is the religion of humanity. This is what religion essentially means to humanity.

## TWENTY GOLDEN PRECEPTS

(*Sri Swami Sivananda*)

1. Control anger by love, service, patience and forgiveness.
2. Back-bite not, slander not, vilify not, abuse not others.
3. Give up fault-finding.
4. Speak truthfully, sweetly, lovingly and softly.
5. Have faith in God, yourself and Scriptures, words of the Preceptor, Law of Karma and its fruits.
6. Indulge not in vain talk.
7. Do not steal.
8. Do not destroy life.
9. Do not tell lies.
10. Do not take intoxicants.
11. Covet not other's wealth. Slay greed.
12. Avoid unlawful conjugal relations.
13. Annihilate egotism, pride, hatred, etc.
14. Associate with Saints and Sages.
15. Give up meat, fish, eggs, etc. Take vegetarian diet.
16. Keep daily spiritual diary.
17. Stick to resolves.
18. Be humble, tolerant, pure, obedient, serene, self-restrained, courageous, virtuous, dispassionate and discriminative.
19. Be good. Do good.
20. Pray fervently. Sing. Meditate regularly and attain God-realization now and here.

A p p e n d i x

REPORTS : GREETINGS : GOOD WISHES

# Parliament of Religions

By Dr. M Hafiz Syed

"The Amrit Bazaar Patrika," Allahabad, 14th March, 1953

More than a year ago it was contemplated to hold a Parliament of Religions in Madras but for some reason or the other the organizers could not manage to hold its session there. As Swami Sivananda Saraswati was the chief mover of this idea and was really keen not to prolong its holding any longer, he suddenly decided with his limited resources to hold the Parliament of Religions during the Easter Holidays on the 3rd, 4th and 5th April 1953 with the aid of more than 150 young and old Sannyasins who had already been trained under his guidance to render unselfish service without accepting even common thanks from public. He announced his decision without any delay sometime in January 1953, and issued invitation to all the religious and semi-religious organizations of India and elsewhere. The response from certain quarters was not encouraging as it should have been.

The most encouraging feature of this Parliament was the acceptance of Sir C P Ramaswamy Aiyar a world famous scholar & statesman and lover of ancient wisdom as its President. Dr K M Munshi was to inaugurate it but could not do so. So the inauguration ceremony of this Parliament was performed by Sir C P Ramaswamy Aiyar who during the course of his inaugural extempore speech emphasized the need of unity among various religions of the world and quoted scriptural authorities in support of his argument. He said that in ancient India also people of various denominations and creeds used to assemble together in order to understand each other's point of view and to realize the underlying unity of the essential principles of various faiths. The most striking fea-

ture of Sir C P Ramaswamy Aiyar's lecture were his boldness of conception, clarity of thought and his comparative study of ancient ideals in terms of modern thought. The President's inaugural speech was preceded by procession with Guru Granth Sahib from Rishikesh to Sivanandanaagar and the address of welcome by the Chairman of the Reception Committee, Sri N C Ghosh, M.A. After the inauguration of the Parliament Swami Sivananda in a few chosen words stated the need of holding Parliament of Religions in Rishikesh. His speech was followed by prayers and Bhajans.

## Nazibullah Khan's Message

The afternoon session of the 3rd April was to have been presided over by Dr Nazibullah Ambassador of Afghanistan. Due to some pre-occupation he could not reach in time and wrote a letter to excuse himself in the following words 'So with my great regret I have to deprive myself of this great honour, thinking to come over some other time and express my apologies to Maj-Gen A N Sharma and the convenors.' He also added to his letter the following "coming from the land of great and early Risbis as well as the home of great mystics of Islam like Hujwari and Sanat of Ghazna Maulana Jalaluddin Balkhi and Muniruddin Chishti".

I can assure you that my countrymen inspired by those apostles of tolerance and fraternity will appreciate and support your mission.'

In the absence of Dr Nazibullah Revd E St John Catchpool of the Friends Society of Delhi presided Dr M H Syed, read a paper on 'Islam Anti Humanita-

rian," during the course of which he said the basic principles of Islam, a faith in all the prophets of the world, is enough to give the lie to those who think that Islam does not tolerate faith other than itself. The great and liberal mind that preached not only love and respect for the founders of the great religions of the world but much more than that faith in them—could not shrink down to the level of utter intolerance for those very religions. Tolerance is not in fact the word that can sufficiently indicate the breadth of the attitude of Islam to other religions. It preaches equal love for all, equal respect for all and equal faith in all. Not to compel the unbelievers to accept Islam, for it was against all the broad principles in which they had been hitherto brought up. Now, it was to establish religious freedom, to stop all religious persecution to protect the houses of worship of all religions.

He was followed by Dr. B.L. Atreya, Head of Philosophy Department, Banaras Hindu University, who in his speech, emphasised the need for living up to the ideals preached by every faith. He said that morality may be divorced from religion, it is not necessary for a moral man to believe in this, that or other religion in order to follow strict moral principles. He also said that we cannot ignore scientific researches that have bearings on man's moral and economical life.

The evening session of the 3rd April was occupied with the discourses given by Sri Vijnanott Jiji Swami Nityananda Ji Maharaj and other Sannyasins. On April 4th during the morning session the following speakers addressed the Parliament.

1. Sri Brahmachari Prakash Des (Representing the Self-realization Fellowship, America and the Yogodha Sangam, Indis);

2. Sri Sardar Bahadur Balwant Singh Puri (General Secretary, Red Cross Society);

3. Sri C.K. Kochukoshy (Representing the International Cultural Forum, Delhi);

4. Sri Gaye Prasad (Representing the Divine Light Mission);

5. Sri H.J. Heblitzel (Representing the Self-realization Fellowship, Switzerland);

6. H.H. Sri Kumaraawamy (Nava Kalyana Math, Dharwar)

#### Bharatiyar's Lecture

In the afternoon session Yogi Shuddhananda Bharatiyar presided and delivered a most illuminating and highly inspiring lecture which was appreciated by one and all. During the course of his Presidential address he remarked: "Humanity depends by Interdependence. A fruit comes from a branch, a branch lives by leaves; they live by the nourishment received by the branches; the branches live by the trunk, the trunk by the roots, the roots by the water and thus everything in this world is a combination of several things. The life and culture of humanity is a synthesis of several religions, the thoughts of several sages and the service of innumerable hands."

Sri Prem Mohan Verma, an advocate of the Allahabad High Court, read a thoughtful paper on "Vedanta, the future religion of the world." In proof of his arguments he quoted a number of eminent sants and sages of India who had deeper faith in the value of Vedantic thought. Mr. Verma thinks that Vedantic principles are so rational that they alone would solve almost all the problems of life if they are intelligently understood and observed by the educated people of India and elsewhere. Vedanta is the only unifying and cementing force in the world-thought.

### Sri Gauri Prasad's Remarks.

In the morning session of the 5th April under the Presidentship of Sri Gauri Prasad, Retired Sessions Judge, Sri Thakur Dutt Sharma, famous Vaid of Lahore and now of Dehra Dun, addressed the Parliament of Religions.

In the concluding portion of his speech he remarked :

"This body is the means of attaining the Highest Good and an exalted status in the other world. Of the eighty four lakhs forms of the cycle of transmigration, the human body alone is capable of virtuous actions and it can be acquired only as a reward for highly meritorious deeds. He who gets such a gift and still does not turn it to account in doing noble religious deeds verily wastes his life."

A representative of the national spiritual assembly of the Bahais of India and Mr. Shamli delivered very informative lectures on the Bahai movement, its origin and history and its influence on the political life of the world.

### Plea for World Peace

The afternoon session of 5th April was most illuminating. Sri Swami Ganeshwarananda of Ramdham, Hardwar, and one of his disciples delivered in Hindi two lectures on the means for the promotion of peace in the world. They quoted scriptural authority to prove that the world security and peace could never be attained without following the essential teachings found in the scriptures, the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads among them, which teach in no uncertain terms the common unity of mankind and the underlying divinity in all outer phenomena. It is inconsistent, they said, with the faith in the divinity of man to fly at each other's throat and harm each other in order to gain one's own security. With-

out the recognition of common life the world cannot attain peace and security.

In addition to these discourses Sri Kshemara Swamiji of Dharwar explained in a lucid form the underlying meaning of the spiritual significance of Vira Saivism, a school of Indian philosophy with which most of us in the North were unfamiliar. Prajapati Brahm Kumari of Mount Abu also spoke on the inner significance of the practical spiritual life as led by her and her fellow-aspirants on the path of spiritual realization.

### Ayyangar's Observations

In the afternoon session of the 5th April, Mr. Ananthaasayanam Ayyangar, Deputy Speaker (now speaker) of the House of Representatives (Lok Sabha), speaking at the concluding session of the Parliament of Religions, appealed to the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union to "come together as early as possible, give up atomic weapons and utilize their energies for common human welfare." The Indonesian Ambassador, Dr. Soadrassoo, was among the distinguished visitors.

Mr. Ayyangar said that each country had developed in a particular way and had its own way of life and there was no reason why others should not be allowed to make their own experiments.

Welcoming the idea of Parliament of Religions, Mr. Ayyangar said: "We are all one. We all believe in the existence of the spirit. To a man of a large heart, the world is a family. Humanity is our God, its service our worship."

Sri Swami Sivananda, the author and originator of the idea of the Parliament of Religions, did his level best to make the delegates and the visitors as comfortable as possible. His young disciples and other workers did not spare themselves at all in rendering every possible service to the

delegates end to the Parliament at large.

A vote of thanks was moved by Maj.-Geo. A.N. Sharma and Dr. M.H. Syed, along with two ladies and one young man. The only regrettable feature of this inspiring gathering was a minor incident when a Sannyasi of the Kali Kamliwase organization insisted on speaking as long as he liked and resented some remark which was made against his point of view.

The religions of Jainism and Buddhism were not properly represented. With the exception of a few speakers none of the

delegates had come fully prepared, though some of the addresses and papers read were thought-provoking. It is hoped that if and when this Parliament of Religions is again held, it will be fully representative Parliament of all religions and those who take part in its deliberations will devote sufficient time to study and prepare their lectures in order to expound their individual creed. On the whole, the Parliament was a great success in so far as it inspired the people and helped to disseminate spiritual ideals among the people of India.

## A RELIGIOUS PARLIAMENT TO MEET AT RISHIKESH

*"The Hindustan Times," Delhi, Thursday, April 2, 1953*

Delegates representing various religions, cultural and social organizations, universities and educational institutions, are assembled at a three-day convention of the Parliament of Religions which is to meet at Rishikesh tomorrow.

The convention will be held at Auanda Kotir, Divine Life Society's H.Q., on the bank of the Ganga where it emerges out of Himalayas into the green plains of U.P. Swami Sivananda Saraswati, 66, founder of the Society, who claims to have millions of followers in the country and abroad is one of the four conveners. Other conveners are Mr. C.P. Ramaswamy Aiyar, Vice-Chancellor of the Annamalai University, Major-General A.N. Sharma, Indian Army, and Swami Shuddhananda Bharati, well-known composer. The purpose of the convention is to "inculcate a truly spiritual outlook in the modern intelligentsia and the masses of the world with particular emphasis on the sanctity and greatness of every religion and to enliven the much neglected fundamental common concepts in all the faiths."

### Methods of Fellow-Feeling

The convention will endeavour to

evolve methods for promoting international fellow-feeling, and eliminating fanaticism, religious intolerance, caste bigotry, sectarian rivalry and hatred that engulf the true spirit of the religions of the world."

It will seek to synthesize the different modes of approach to the ultimate goal of life through the harmonious integration of the practical aspects of the world's religions with the rational aspects of philosophical doctrines. It will also discuss measures designed to enlighten the people on the true purpose of life emphasizing the need for living up to the tenets of religious ethics.

Lastly, the convention is expected to set up an advisory board which will advise delegates on steps of spiritual uplift of the people at large.

Prominent leaders of various religions thoughts and movements have pledged their support to the convention. The convention will be presided over by Mr. C.P. Ramaswamy Aiyar, while Swami Sivananda will conduct the deliberations.

# They Teach the Gospel of One World

*The Sunday Standard, Bombay, 5th April, 1953*

A Parliament of Religions is being held at Rishikesh under the presidency of Swami Sivananda.

Its object is to spread the spiritual truth of all religions and to create brotherhood and international fellowship. In practical terms the Parliament will synthesize the different modes of approach of various religions, and evolve a common platform to make humanity aware of its heritage.

The term 'Parliament of Religions' recalls the history which Swami Vivekananda made at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago sixty years ago.

When leaders of rival faiths boasted the superiority of their respective religions and could not find any merit in others, the orange-robed monk from India struck a note of contrast by addressing the congregation as "Brothers and Sisters of America".

Electric was the effect on the audience. Jarring voices were hushed for the moment and a hypnotic spell of the brotherhood of man descended on all.

*That day began the resurgence of Hinduism as a universal religion.*

Hinduism is the only non-proselytizing religion which claims spiritual adherents all over the world, because of its composite culture and catholicity of outlook.

Swami Vivekananda's good work was carried on by great personalities like Sri Aurobindo and Ramana Maharshi, who were liberated souls and in whom there was no difference between precept and practice. Their life was a beacon to all.

Swami Sivananda is the living embodiment of the ideal of "one world."

He is preaching and spreading that

gospel through the Divine Life Society which has branches in India and abroad.

The headquarters of the Society is Ananda Kaliir which is situated amidst enchanting surroundings of the Himalayan ranges, about two miles north of Rishikesh.

## Torch-Bearers

Here is a laboratory of human experiment where the human body is reconditioned and attuned to the cult of the higher man.

Brotherhood of man, equal status of all religions and common tenets that build world solidarity are not only preached but also practised there.

To the members of the Divine Life Society, the world is one and does not admit of barriers of religion or fragmentation based on racial and creedal distinctions.

Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis and Europeans live in this colony as the torch-bearers of a new life.

Religions are many, but truth is one. That is the ideal which Swami Sivananda has set before his followers.

The Divine Life Society is a beehive of activities. It is non-denominational and non-sectarian, and has thrown open its doors to seekers of truth irrespective of their religion and race.

It initiates them into the cult of Yoga to make the human body a fit instrument for realizing the higher purpose of religion and truth.

Although some of the members of the society are experts in Yoga culture, they are precluded from indulging in exhibitionism or cheap shows which have made the noble institution of Yoga misunderstood.

The dynamic energy which Yoga

releases to the human body is to be dedicated to the service and happiness of mankind.

The Vedantic section in the Society expounds in its inmates the higher philosophies on which human conduct should be based. It inculcates ideals like selflessness, service and brotherhood as a solvent for the ills of the world.

The Yoga-Vedanta Forest University is not merely a teaching faculty but enjoins all students to live everyday life in terms of its teachings and thus set an example to others.

The whole scheme of life in Ananda Kutir is to turn out idealists realists, and not mere bookworms or exhibitionists.

The Society is regularly publishing a number of journals and books, most of them by Swami Sivananda, to educate the people in the tenets of service and sacrifice.

## A UNIQUE EVENT OF WORLD-WIDE SIGNIFICANCE

*My Magazine of India, 1st April, 1953*

In this great and holy land of tolerance, a unique event of world-wide significance will be shaping itself early this week. At Rishikesh will be held, under the benevolent and watchful guidance of H.H. Mahamandaleshwar Sri Swami Sivananda, a Parliament of Religions.

At this critical juncture in the history of the world when the cold war is "heating up," on all accounts, when man has forgotten the purpose of life, when mass hysteria is much in evidence in several countries of Asia and Europe, it is but fitting that a Parliament consisting of representatives of the various faiths in the world is to meet and devise the best plan to establish peace and carry the torch of Truth to the darkest corners of the earth.

There will be lively discussions and illuminating lectures and discourses by

### 4 Service of Poor

More than acquiring knowledge and culture the accent is on service—selfless service, and service for the desolate and the decrepit.

Swamiji is now concentrating on large-scale medical relief and organizing mobile units to reach the hill-people between Rishikesh and Badrinath. Some retired doctors have volunteered their services for Swamiji's medical mission.

Swamiji himself has set the example by regularly visiting the leper colony and attending in its inmates.

A medico turned sage, he preaches and practises that the way to God is through service of the poor.

The Parliament of Religions cannot have chosen a better venue for harnessing ethical and spiritual forces, and forging a united front of all religions for world peace.

savants, leaders of thought and philosophers who each know their respective religions like the palm of their hand. The Parliament meets for a threefold object. Emphasis will rightly be laid on the importance of religion in a man's life. Of course it will have to be free of the bigotry and prejudices that poison the mind. The second aim is to foster a sense of universal brotherhood and international fellowship. Last but not least, practical suggestions will be made as to how best the different modes of approach towards the ultimate goal of life can be synthesized.

Many men have talked glibly of a one-world Government. As a valued contributor to this journal points out, the League of Nations became a dismal failure, and the United Nations Organization, too, it is

to be feared, cannot go very far because the voice of Truth is very often in a minority and the main power blocs with the strength of arms hidden behind overshadow the whole show.

Only when the peoples of the world come to realize that all religions, like so many roads, lead to the same goal can there be permanent peace in the world,

and if they know also that war is something most abhorrent to the Divine Spirit and sets at nought the purpose of life, they can make it impossible for their Governments to engage in the pastime of piling up armaments. It is here that the Parliament of Religions can give a splendid lead and also meet from time to time to review the progress made and consolidate its ground. We wish it all success.

## MASS SPIRITUAL AWAKENING ADVOCATED

*The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7th April, 1953*

Rishikesh, April 4.

Among those who pleaded for mass spiritual awakening at the Parliament of Religions here today was Mr. Hablitzel of the Self-realization Fellowship, Switzerland.

The Fellowship claims 84 branches throughout the world with Western headquarters in the United States and Eastern headquarters at Calcutta. Mr. Hablitzel said he had been practising Yoga for a year.

Speeches today again laid emphasis on the unity of different faiths despite differences in ways of worship. Brahmechar Sri Prakash said that tremendous progress in material world had conversely retarded spiritual growth and advancement with equal force. It was "high time" that great men of the world and leaders of thought

met on a common platform and "evolved out a universal principle which will regulate all world affairs."

Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati of Shuddha Samanya Nilayam of Vadalur, South India, said, "Politics has thoroughly failed to restore peace. From monarchy to democracy, and from democracy to totalitarian communism, all experiments have failed to bring peace in the world."

Major-General Yedunath Singh received ovation when he said that the soldier had essentially a non-violent approach. Even when he had to use force to defend the country he had no ill-will towards the opponent and tried to achieve the aim with minimum obstruction. Behind the khaki and olive green was a heart that melted at every arrow, he said.

## ETHICAL CULTURE

*Sri Swami Sivananda*

Speak the TRUTH Speak little. Speak kindly. Speak sweetly.

Do not injure anyone in thought, word and deed Be kind to all.

Be sincere, straightforward and open-hearted in your talks and dealings.

Be honest. Earn by the sweat of your brow Do not accept any money, thing or favour unless earned lawfully. Develop nobility and integrity.

Control fits of anger by serenity, patience, love, mercy and tolerance. Forget and forgive. Adapt yourself to man and events.

# Attainment of World Peace

*The Hindustan Standard, Calcutta and Delhi, 5th April, 1953*  
 (From Our Staff Correspondent)

Rishikesh, April 4—Savants and sages professing different religious faiths but uniting under a common ideal attending the Parliament of Religions here were today unanimous in their view that attempts must be directed towards the attainment of permanent peace in the world.

The only practical method for achieving this objective was proper dissemination and practice of all religions, they concluded.

Almost all speakers in the morning session, convened amidst a pictresque scenery, were unanimous in their view that the practice of 'Yoga' and the spread of universal message of love would end world tensions, all the more deepened by the invention of the latest weapons of destruction.

Swami Vyasa Ji, Raj Guru of the King of Nepal, made a plea for recognition of Sanskrit as the national language for India and said that a mission should be sent abroad which "can carry India's spiritual message to the farthest corners of the globe."

### Practice of Yoga

Twenty-nine-year old Brahmacari H. J. Hahnloser of Switzerland, said that he had come to India to understand absolute Truth and had found that in the practice of 'Yoga.' "It is hard to believe for a European that such peaceful places are still existing in the world which is growing more and more materialistic in outlook," he said. The purpose of this reunion was very good. Its honesty and importance would make the Parliament the most effective and outstanding event of the present times. "Spiritual awakening is very essential today," he said. If people paid more attention to the

development of the soul and mind, world peace and mass awakening could be achieved. He said similar Parliaments should be organized all over the world and spiritual heads of all churches should meet and come to a common conclusion.

The second day's morning session was presided over by His Holiness Sri Kumanaswami of Nava Kalyan Muni, Dharwar, and over a dozen speakers enlightened the audience with their views on the philosophy of various religions.

Sri S. P. Jain of International Cultural Forum said that war and violence were contrary to all religions teachings. Major-General Yedunath Singh of Indian Army said that every attempt should be made to bring lasting peace in the world. Soldiers' role in this was by no means small, he said.

In his presidential address Sri Kumanaswami gave a learned discourse on Veera Saivism whose history was 5000 years old and which formed the most ancient branch of Hinduism. He dwelt at length on its philosophy and showed ways for the practice of Siva Yoga. His speech ended with Bhajans, common prayers and meditation.

### One Self in All

"We are all assembled here to establish the Parliament of religions in our own heart, to cultivate divine virtues, and to see the one Self in all. We should melt all illusory differences and feel that one God dwells in all beings." Thus said Sri Swami Sivananda, President of the Divine Life Society, and the Chief Convener of the Parliament of Religions in his prayer at the inaugural session of the three-day Parliament yesterday.

The Parliament commenced its ses-

ral session with prayer from the Vedas and Guru Granth Sahib

Earlier, there was a procession with Guru Granth Sahib at Rishikesh. Sri N C Ghoah chairman of the Reception Committee, in his welcome address, said, "You, who have realized that religion is the talisman that could banish disharmony which is the root-cause of all wars, have assembled here in order to devise ways and means of ensuring peace. Hardly ever before had there been such a Parliament on the soil of India. I venture to say that a Parliament of Religions could grow and yield the fruits of peace and harmony only if it is planted on the soil of India which is rich in the life giving elements of real religion."

#### Dr. Iyer's Address

In his inaugural address, Dr Sir C P Ramaswami Iyer, Vice-Chancellor of the Annamalai University, said, "This idea of a Parliament is not unknown to us. It is part of our tradition. It is our function in this Parliament of Religions to emphasize the unity in variety which is the hall mark of true religious quest."

Emphasizing that variety was as necessary as unity, Dr Ramaswami Iyer said, "Unity must be emphasized, but equally variety must not be forgotten. Those, who would like to have a dull uniformity or unity, are doing a great disservice to religion as those who emphasize meaningless differences."

From this viewpoint he declared, "I make bold to say that the Indian faith, the Indian creed is itself a Parliament of Religions." He quoted an Indian prayer which hailed God as the ultimate goal of each and all religions. Another prayer of the Indian, said he, gave man a pattern of thought for his daily life.

"Our religion our spiritual background, is not a thing for vague dreaming, but for

realization. That is why our great scribes are called Darshana, that which is seen," he said.

Summing up the message of the Maharsis of India, he said, "Their first message is an ever-present realization that the universe is the manifestation of the Great Spirit. The second which follows from that is that there is no hard and fast line in this universe to be drawn between Nature and man, between man and man, between the Supreme and the individual. The third is that evil, suffering and sorrow are not absolute, but events relative to the evolving spirit. All this is governed superintended, and supervised so to say by a revelation of Rita or Dharma."

#### Philosophical Thought

Dr Iyer traced the history of philosophical thought during the past four centuries and remarked, "We have come round to a full circle from fear to fear. Therefore, at this stage, when the whole world is gripped by fear, our Parliament of Religions and especially the contribution of India to that Parliament is notable."

"Life without religion is a dreary waste and death," said Swami Sivananda in his speech following Dr C P Ramaswami Iyer. "Without religion there is no morality, no spirituality, education without religion is not worth the name." "There is only one religion", he said, "and that is the religion which is the religion of faith and the religion of consciousness. Truth is one; sages call it variously. It should be realized by becoming practical seekers not by mere study or learning or facturing. You should become spiritual heroes by actually practising religion in your daily life, by practising Japa and Kirtan every day by selfless service and Sadhana."

The SAI realization Fellowship of America the Red Cross Society, the Inter-

national cultural Forum, the Divine Light Mission, are some of the organizations represented at the Parliament.

Among the distinguished foreign delegates to the Parliament are Mr. Horace Alexander, Rev. E. St John Catchpool and Sri Chon Hsing-Kaung.

The Parliament will hold its session on the 4th and 5th also.

#### Danger to Religion

The afternoon session assembled under the chairmanship of Rev. E. St. John Catchpool of the Society of Friends. The main theme of the speakers was "the danger to religion".

Dr. Mohammed Hafiz Syad, retired Professor of Philosophy, Aligarh Muslim University, asked the people not to be indifferent to or ignorant of their faith.

Dr. B. L. Atreya, head of the Department of Philosophy, Benaras Hindu University, advocated the employing of scientific

means for the propagation of religion and test out his dogmas and beliefs.

#### N. C. Chatterjee's Plea

Sri N. C. Chatterjee, President of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha yesterday urged the reorientation of parliamentary democracy in the light of India's spiritual past.

"It is your duty from this platform, to give a message which will spiritualize the politics of India and politics of Asia and the world," he said.

He regretted that he could not do anything to prevent the Indian Parliament from "passing a war budget of Rs. 199 crores. About Rs. 200 crores of tax-payers' money are spent on army and defence. Hence, there is something which requires the surgeon's knife as well as the spiritual touch. Ordinary Parliament will not work. This Parliament will have to be remodeled by spiritual forces," he declared.

## Sublime Sanctity of Ananda Kufir

*The Hindustan Standard, 4th April, 1953*

Ananda Kufir where the religious leaders of all the important faiths of the world are meeting, is a sanctified place in Munikuti-reti, near Rishikesh, situated on the right bank of the sacred Ganges in the Himalayas, on the way to Lakshman Jhoola and Badrinath.

It has a picturesque background. In days of yore many sages lived in Munikuti-reti and strived for salvation. They did tapasya and so this place is styled as tapovan. It has a commanding and inspiring view besides the Ganges.

In Ananda Kufir lives Swami Sivananda, the Founder-President of the Divine Life Society. Born in September 8, 1887, at Pattamundai, on the sacred bank of the holy Tamraparni, P. V. Kuppanswami chose

the medical line for his avocation. He became a specialist in microscopical studies, tropical medicine and surgery. Being of adventurous nature Dr. Kuppanswami went to Malaya at the age of 25 and had a roaring practice from 1913 to 1923. As a doctor he was the ideal of the hospitals. He would love to be in the company of suffering patients, to understand their feelings and do all that he could to cheer them up. He wrote several useful books on medicine.

Successful worldly life, lucrative profession, name and fame could not, however, hold back this great soul for a long time. He preferred to step forward on the divine path after renouncing the worldly life. In 1923 Dr. Kuppanswami returned to India.

For about a year he travelled throughout the whole country, and visited many holy places. While he was thus wandering from place to place he came to know from a pious, devotee about Rishikesh where Sadhus and renowned Sadhakas could do Sadhana undisturbed. In 1924 he came to Rishikesh.

A glance at the magnificent heights of the lofty Himalayas and a cool refreshing bath in the Ganges made Kuppuswami feel that he had reached the shores of immortality.

'Shastrik' ceremonies of Sannyas on Dr Kuppuswami were performed by Swami Vishnudevananda Mahant of Sri Kaliash Ashram. Dr Kuppuswami was now renamed as Swami Sivananda Saraswati. From the very start of his monastic life Swami Sivananda entered deep meditation in the small hours of night, sometimes keeping vigil for several nights together and pouring forth his surging inner feelings in celestial songs of the Almighty. During his Sadhana period he undertook pilgrimage to Badrinath, Kedarnath as also to Kailas and Mansarovar in Tibet. He walked a distance of over 500 miles unmindful of the inclemencies of the mountainous rugged path and cold weather on his way to Kailas.

From a careful observation of Swami Sivananda's daily life it can be safely said

that he practices Vedanta in his daily life. His creed is "See the Lord in all creatures". In the Divine Life Society, a Parsee, a Hindu, a Muslim, a Christian—all are welcome. Impelled by a burning desire to serve humanity in a variety of ways, to help humanity in a variety of ways to help the spiritual aspirants, to disseminate the spiritual knowledge far and wide and thereby to enable the public to attain the goal of life. Swami Sivananda started the Divine Life Society in 1936. The Society is an all embracing institution. Its objects, ideals and aims are very broad and universal. It includes all the fundamental principles of all religions and cults. It expounds in a rational and scientific manner the Yoga of synthesis. People from all parts of the world assemble at Ananda Kutir for collective Sadhana during the Sadhana Weeks held twice every year. Besides several pamphlets and books the society publishes a large number of different magazines. Swami Sivananda has written several dozens of books on practical lessons on Yoga, etc. Among the multifarious activities of the Ashram, the principal ones have been the Sadhana Weeks, free dispensaries, Annakshetra, distribution of free literature and educational institutions.

The Divine Life Society has numerous branches in different parts of the world.

### HEART CULTURE Sri Swami Sivananda

Doing good to others is the highest religion. Do some selfless service for a few hours every week without egoism or expectation of reward. Do your worldly duties in the same spirit. Work is worship. Dedicate it to God.

Give 2 to 10 per cent of your income in charity every month. Share what you have with others. Let the world be your family. Remove selfishness.

Be humble and prostrate to all beings mentally. Feel the Divine presence everywhere. Give up vanity, pride and hypocrisy.

Have unwavering faith in God, Gita and your Guru. Make a total self-surrender to God and pray "Thy will be done. I want nothing". Submit to the Divine will in all events and happenings with equanimity.

See God in all beings and love them as your own self. Do not hate anyone.

# Russia and America Urged to Work for World Welfare

*The Hindustan Times, 7th April, 1953*

Rishikesh, April 6

Mr. Ananlassayānam Ayyangar, Deputy Speaker (now Speaker) of the House of the People (Loke Sabha), speaking at the concluding session of the Parliament of Religions here yesterday appealed to the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union to "come together as early as possible, give up atomic weapons and utilize their energies for common human welfare."

Welcoming the idea of the Parliament of Religions, Mr. Ayyangar said: "To a man of a large heart, the whole world is a family. Humanity is our God and the service our worship."

Other speakers at the Parliament stressed that religion could not be divorced from the problems of life.

Sardar Dileep Singh of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais New Delhi, said: "The common man wants bread. If you do not give it to him he will sell his soul to the devil. Therefore religion will have to come down from the clouds and chalk out plans for a practical welfare state."

At yesterday's session Dr. M H Syed, retired Professor of Allahabad University, pleaded that religion should not be blamed for the faults of its followers. In his paper on "Is Islam anti-humanitarian?" Dr. Syed referred to the salient facts in the Koran to show that Islam did not sanction violence, war, or impure conduct.

God's Master-Plan

Rev E St. Catchpool, of the Quaker

Movement, said: "There is a job which each of us can do, whether we are people of importance or no importance at all. Each one of us is an unrepeatable experience of God. God has a Master-Plan. We have our part to play. If we fail to play our part, God's Great Master-Plan is just that little bit incomplete and we have failed. Rev. Catchpool, explaining the aims and ideas of the Quakers said that he had planned to open 50 or more youth hostels in India.

Brahmachari Prakash Das of the Yegoda Satsang, Calcutta, explained the aims and ideals of the Satsang and its American counterpart (the Self realization Fellowship) founded by the late Paramahansa Yogananda.

Mr Balwant Singh Purasi said: "Sikhism, founded by Guru Nanak, believes in but one God, the creator, whose name is Truth. The doctrines of Sikhism are intended to inculcate gratitude for the favours received, philanthropy, loyalty, honesty and all the moral and domestic virtues which are also upheld by other religions." He also gave an outline of the humanitarian services rendered by the Red Cross Society.

Gen. Yedonath Singh said the Indian Army held before itself the great ideals placed before them by Swami Sivananda

Sri Kumbhawami of Nave Kalyan Math, Dharwar, gave a succinct analysis of the Veera-Saiva Philosophy.

## ENERGY CULTURE

*Sri Swami Sarananda*

Observe abstinence (Mouna) for two hours daily, and four to eight hours on Sundays. Observe celibacy according to your age and circumstances. Restrict the indulgence to once a month. Decrease it gradually to once a year. Finally take a vow of abstinence for whole life.

## Greetings and Good Wishes.

I take this opportunity to send you my best wishes for the success of the Parliament of Religions you propose to hold. We, in India, are proud of our heritage in matters relating to religion, and your efforts in bringing together thinkers and philosophers from every part of the globe is praiseworthy. I have every hope that their deliberations would have a far-reaching effect on the present-day world, dispelling under fear and suspicion, and would succeed to removing gloom and uncertainty.

—Hon'ble Sri Swaran Singh, Minister, Works, Housing and Supply, New Delhi.

I wish every success to the Parliament of Religions.

—H E Sri R R Diwakar, Governor of Bihar

I am very glad to know that a Parliament of Religions is being held at Rishikesh India, the birthplace and cradle of spiritual thought and development, has a great role to play in advancing the cause of universal peace, and revitalizing the concept of brotherhood of mankind. ... As such the Parliament of Religions will be in a position to make an outstanding contribution to the world, which is at present disunited and torn by fierce external conflicts and still deeper conflicts within the mind of man... I send my good wishes to all those associated with this Parliament, and wish you all success.

—Yuvraj Karaoisogh, Head of the Jammu and Kashmir State

The Parliament will have a historical significance, and moreover it is my conviction that it will mean a great deal especially in regard to future peace of the world.

—Sri M Sdayasu, Ryoanji Temple, Kyoto, Japan.

I congratulate you heartily on the success of the Parliament of Religions. I am sure there will be full understanding and promise of co-operation between you and the Religious Association of the Ansaf Kyo, which will be represented by myself together with delegates from other religious associations, in Japan.

—H H Yonosuke Nakano, Founder, Ananai, Kyo Shimizu City, Japan.

The need of a spiritual outlook is particularly great at this time of strife and conflict. All the great religions of the world agree in emphasizing the need of purity of thought and word, of good action and kindness to one's fellow-men. I hope the Parliament of Religions will bring out this basic unity of all religions and thus contribute to a better understanding between the peoples of the world which is so necessary at present.

—H E Sri B G. Kher, (Former) Indian High Commissioner to UK

The acting Director-General of the UNESCO wishes all success to your enterprise which is intended to promote the cause of spiritual unity of mankind. The

I appreciate the object which your Society aims to promote and send you my best wishes for the success of the Parliament of Religions.

—His Highness the Maharaja of Patiala

The work that you are doing (in connection with the Parliament of Religions) seems to me most constructive and hopeful, and I earnestly wish you well in it.

—H E Chester Bowles,

(Former) Ambassador of the U.S.A. to India

I send you my best wishes for the success of the Parliament of Religions and wish it to secure close co-operation to achieving the aims and ideals of creating eternal peace.

—(The Late) H E Dr. H C. Mukherjee,

(Former) Governor of West Bengal

It is certainly wonderful that you are arranging the Parliament of Religions for the promotion of world peace. May the blessings of God be with you.

—Sri Massharu Tsouguchi,

Tokyo, Japan

May I congratulate you on your decision to convene a Parliament of Religions at Rishikesh. I send you my best wishes for a very successful session.

—Sri Kasturi Sriovasse, Editor, The Hindu, Madras

I send you my good wishes for the Parliament of Religions.

—Shaikh Mohammad Ahmadullah

(Former) Prime Minister, Jammu and Kashmir

Sivacandaji is the only Avatar who has put down his teachings in original writing. Not content with continuing his routine work His Holiness has organized in the Holy Land the great Parliament of Religions. We should be grateful to our beloved Gurudev.

—Dr Edward Bittencourt, D.Litt.,  
Santiago, Chile

The idea of holding such a conference is good.

—Honble Dr Sampurnanand,  
Home (now Chief) Minister, Uttar Pradesh

I wish your efforts every success.

—Honble Sri P S Dehmukhi,  
Minister for Agriculture, New Delhi

The Parliament of Religions at Rishikesh signals an important step towards the world order of a spiritually united nations. Blessings of peace profound be on you all and may your efforts be divinely crowned with success.

—Mr Joseph Buaby, Editor,  
The Voice, Southwick, England

The Parliament of Religions, proposed to be called, is eminently basitling to reveal the true individuality of all apparent individualities, the true Self beneath the many conflicting selves and the underlying unity in the midst of the external variations.

—H.H. Swami Rajeswarananda,  
Upanishad Vihar, Madras

I wish you all well in your endeavours through the Parliament of Religions.

—H. E. Sri Prakasha,  
(Former) Governor of Madras.

I am glad to think of the Parliament of Religions to be held in the Himalayas at a time when throughout the Christian world people's minds will be focused on religion because of Good Friday and Easter Sunday. In my mind, as I write, is the thought of your two hundred branches and associate groups throughout India and indeed in many parts of the five continents of the world. I think of your own personality, your devotion, your purposes and your determinations and I link all these in my thoughts with the hopes which surge in every human heart for the era to come when there will be a better life for the whole of mankind. I visualize the great purpose of the Parliament of Religions and to link it with an earnestly hoped-for common acceptance as in the purpose of life for the whole human race. Your Parliament of Religions is most welcome for it will re-state, I am sure, when stating its own purposes, the purpose of all religions and the commonly acceptable purpose of life. I send you my best wishes for your grand world-wide work—and may you find whole-hearted co-operation from all friends and colleagues throughout the world who believe today in the triumph of good and right.

—Sri Bert Taylor,  
General Welfare Movement,  
Lancashire, England.

It is indeed very far-seeing of you to be able to appreciate the adaptations which were necessary to transform these wonderful teachings into the current journalistic vernacular—so as to make them easily acceptable to the English-knowing "man in the street." I am writing this at once to express my very deep appreciation.

—Sri Desmond Dunn,  
Insight School of Yoga,  
Surrey (England).

I send my sincere greetings and best wishes for the success of the Parliament of Religions.

—Madame Sophia Wadta,  
Founder, The P. E. N., Bombay.

We welcome every effort to secure a wider and more sympathetic interpretation of the eternal verities that concern all man. May God guide you and your associates both into a rich experience of Truth and to a wide dissemination of the understanding of Truth through the Parliament of Religions.

—Right Rev. I. Waskom Pickett,  
The Methodist Church in Southern Asia.

I hope you will have a very successful session of the Parliament of Religions, which I am sure, will go a long way in establishing world peace and to bring about a closer and more intimate understanding between men. Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to be associated with such a worthy endeavour.

—H. E. General Bijoye Shamsheer,  
(Former) Nepalese Ambassador to India.

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*The Voice* Southwick England

The Parliament of Religions proposed to be called is eminently befitting to reveal the true individuality of all apparent individuals, the true Self beneath the many conflicting selves and the underlying unity in the midst of the external variations

—H H Swami Rajeswarananda  
Upanishad Vihar Madras

For the above reason I am very happy that eminent religio-politicians from all over the world have gathered today to discuss from every angle, the many problems relative to the relief of mankind. We send profound appreciation from the far distant island of Japan.

To the sponsor and to all the leaders we pay our respect from the bottom of our hearts.

—Sri M. Sadayasu,  
Seigan-ji, Ryozenji Temple,  
Ukyo-ward, Kyoto, Japan.

Understanding of the essential unity of all religions and as a consequence respect and tolerance towards other religious groups are important instruments to create world-order and peace. Therefore all efforts to achieve that goal have to be highly appreciated and encouraged.

But there is still a greater task a Parliament of Religions has to face, a task on which depends largely the survival of humanity. Diplomats and politicians may think in terms of using the sword as a means to achieve their aims of power-politics, but the golden rule as incorporated in the ethical teaching of the major religions does not permit any doubt that war is absolutely an horrid abomination from all religious standards. It cannot come in any consideration for religious-minded people. If the adherents of all religions would practise in their daily life, the original ethical teaching of their masters and prophets war would be impossible as also any kind of political and economical intolerance and exploitation.

All Churches are well-organized and have an enormous spiritual influence on millions of their devoted followers. A united movement of all religious bodies for peace would be a tremendous force among the many efforts to eliminate war from the surface of our planet. India, the land of Mahavira and Buddha, Asoka and Gandhi, the land where the sacredness of all life is widely considered as the highest ethical postulate, should take the lead in creating this united front.

—Dr. Alfred W. Parker,  
Chicago, U.S.A.

On this great occasion, I send you my message of goodwill to all your deliberations for the upliftment of mankind and for the convening of a World Parliament of Religions composed of the Masters of Light and Life and Wisdom. The pattern of mankind is sorely confused, and distorted Ideas of world welfare based upon the power of destructive machines, and an ever-shifting foundation of an economic edifice built upon avarice and greed, must fall to the ground as foreseen by the ancient seers and foretold by the ancient sages down through the many ages.

What can take the place of the tortuous failure of political leaders, and aggressive tyrants of exploitation of human lives, except the spiritual awakening of mankind through the demonstrating of the goodness of life and ultimate purpose of Universal Brotherhood? Mysticism and theoretical Christianity must change their creeds into substantial service for humanity, promote universal brotherhood and foster tolerance and peace, and thus bring into humanity's experience the Kingdom of Righteousness and individual attainment, wherein a faith is changed to sight."

May the blessings of God, our father, and the Sustaining presence of the Holy Breath, be ours ever more

—Sri Charles Dennis Boltwood, U.S.A.

To hold a Parliament of Religions is an effort in right direction to harmonize the various conflicting elements of discord and disharmony found in every walk of life. The laudable object of Revered Swami Sivanandaji is bound to have wholehearted co-operation of every individual who craves for creating an atmosphere of peace and toleration. I wish it all success

—Sri J.N. Shinghal, P.C.S., Delhi

I send you my thanks and assure you of my full interest and participation in the Parliament of Religions. I am very much impressed by the good work having done by the Divine Life Society and I am very keen to do my little bit in the service of the noble cause that the Society has made its mission

—Sri Omkar Nath Sharma, M.Sc.,  
The Himalaya Potteries Ltd., Phyllau.

I am so glad that the Parliament of Religions is going to be held at Rishikesh where Swami Sivananda is so ably expounding the eternal truths enshrined in the Vedic scriptures. Swami Sivananda lives the life of a true Rishi and may his personal character and convincing expositions spread the gospel of truth Ahimsa and Karma far and wide among the various warring nations of the world

—Sri V. Ganesh Iyer, Bangalore.

It is hoped that the first Parliament of Religions, one of the greatest task of Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj towards the achievement of Universal Brotherhood and mass spiritual awakening will be crowned with success

—The D.L.S Perambur Branch Madras

Allow me to thank you for kindly inviting me to Ananda Kutir to attend the Parliament of Religions. I am confident it will be a great success, and the message of the Lord will go to the peoples of the world from the base of the Himalayas. I further thank you for sending me a lovely photograph of Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. His Holiness has showered much kindness upon me in such a short time. Will you kindly offer my best regards at his feet.

—Sri Birbal Sharma Lucknow

I propose coming to Ananda Kutir to join the Parliament and have the rare opportunity of listening to the learned discourse of Swamiji, it will thus give me a great pleasure to sit at your feet for about a fortnight and to have some insight into the line that to follow soon or late. I come with the earnest hope that I will have some light on spiritual values through your grace

—Sri R.L. Mason Shillong

The leaflets of the Parliament of Religions are highly elevating and superb and fully instructive. I do not want to let lose this timely and golden opportunity of mixing with the great advocates of world peace at this critical hour not to speak of your holy presence. The aphorisms and selected lines in the above leaflets are highly

elevating and give much food for thought to the inquisitive brain I wish the Almighty in shower His Blessings on one and all who are fortunate enough to assemble there

—Sri S. Muhiukrishna Sasirigal,  
Mylapore Madras

I hope to attend the Parliament of Religions where I hope to have the grand opportunity of listening to Mahatmas scholars and seekers after Truth, expanding their experiences on Religion and philosophy

—Sri B R Cooper, Secunderabad

I offer you my heartfelt congratulations for this sacred and magnificent task of affording such opportunity to all lovers of peace and Religion to discuss and devise means for the betterment of the world and promoting the cause of Universal Religion

With the touch of your grace and with the sacred memory of my past visit to your Ashram I wish to see once again the holy streams of Shanti and Dharma

—Sri Paramatma Prakash M A,  
Govi College, Moradabad U P

I am delighted to learn from the National Herald of 19th inst, that your Divine Life Society has convened a Parliament of Religions at Ananda Kuir, Rishikesh on April 3rd to 5th, 1953. I shall deem it a privilege to attend the same. I do not know how to express my deep sense of obligation under which you are putting the whole religious and the philosophic World by convening such a Parliament

—Sri Hari Kishen Dhaon Advocate Lucknow

In the unsettled conditions of the affairs of managing things of the world today, such Parliament of Religions under the auspices of such august personalities can surely resolve the crisis that is threatening to overtake mankind. The ray of hope that the goods will be delivered by such Institutions is getting reaffirmed to the minds of people whose frustration on all sides is only too conspicuous to merit any mention at my hands.

—Sri K. Sivivasao, B A B L, Alleppey

I consider it my moral duty to highly appreciate your action of giving high honour to the spiritual book ' Guru Granth Sahib ' which contains hymns of the Hindus, Muslims and Sikh holy men and ideas of nearly all the religions at the time of procession in connection with Parliament of Religions. This action of yours is really a very good step for creating spirit of unity in India. I once again appreciate your spirit of tolerance and unity and your efforts to create the same spirit in the whole world.

world ignorance, illiteracy, and prejudice, and thus the most obvious causes of human misery and degradation.

In this natural solitude, far from congested centres of population, one cannot help but feel close to all that which is good and true, pure and noble. Here one can catch a glimpse of eternity. Here one can touch the stars and experience the Divinity which underlies all creation.

But alas, only my spirit can touch this great gathering of dedicated souls. My body must still remain in far off America where the great wheels of industry turn ceaselessly to entertain and comfort, while the masses saturated with the fabulous products of modern science and invention, seek restlessly to find the true happiness that can come only from high spiritual motivation and lofty purpose.

The World University Roundtable, with its affiliated membership in fifty-five countries, and the World University Association of Schools, to which the Divine Life Society and Forest University, your distinguished hosts, adhere, wish the Parliament of Religions the greatest possible success in its deliberations. This must surely become a World Congress of selfless servers, consecrated to the establishment of a Kingdom of Righteousness among the nations of the earth.

Led by such learned scholars and spiritual seers as so nobly exemplified by His Holiness Swami Sivananda, the Grand Design of the Sacred Brotherhood for world unity and civilization will certainly be furthered and eventually realized through these humble efforts.

As Co-ordinator General of the World University International Roundtable, I convey to this Parliament my most sincere felicitations and bless this co-convocation with the spiritual presence of my colleagues who stand with me in this great work of human redemption.

—Dr Howard John Zisko,  
Co-ordinator General,  
World University Roundtable  
Los Angeles, U.S.A.

*Om Tat Sat*  
*Brahmarpanamastu*

# THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

Founded in 1936 by H.H. Sri Swami Sivananda, the Divine Life Society is a centre of consecrated service to mankind, wherefrom the universal and cardinal tenets of religion, ethics and philosophy, with particular emphasis on their practical application in daily life, are disseminated the world over.

A Home of all Religions, the Society's membership is open to all who desire to live a life dedicated to Truth, Purity and Cosmic Love: while several centres woven on the pattern of the headquarters function as dynamic centres of spiritual culture at home and abroad.

The Yoga-Vedanta Forest University trains aspirants in all the systems of Yoga, Religion, Philosophy and medicine in general; while the monthly periodicals such as *Divine Life*, *Health and Long Life*, and the *Forest University Weekly*, enriched with learned contributions from eminent thinkers of East and West, keep space with the dynamic campaign of mass dissemination of Knowledge Divine.

The Shrine of All Faiths conducts prayer services for commonweal and world peace in general, and for the recovery of the ailing and healthful long life of the devotees, on request.

Philanthropic services are neither overlooked: for here could be found a charitable hospital, a free educational institution, and a community kitchen providing food for the monks, selfless workers and the pilgrims, free of charge.

There are no rules, regulations, conditions or restrictions on the visitors and inmates. The seekers after Truth can stay in the SIVANANDA ASHRAM as long as they like and tread the path of Yoga and work in a variety of ways for the peace and prosperity of the world, under the guidance of Sri Swami Sivananda Ji Maharaj.

## WE OFFER YOU

(1) LESSONS AND GUIDANCE for quick spiritual evolution through correspondence. Always write in ENGLISH and send B.P.O. or International Postal Coupons, or Indian postage for reply and for forwarding charges for the publications of the Divine Life Society.

(2) THE INSPIRING WORKS of Sri Swami Sivananda Ji Maharaj and the Journals: *Divine Life*, *Health and Long Life* and *Forest University Weekly* to provide you with lessons on Yoga Vedanta, ethics, religion, health culture, and news about the Ashram activities.

(3) AN IDEAL SPIRITUAL HOME with all comforts and conveniences on the banks of the Holy Ganges in the aylao solitude of the Himalayas. The best period for foreigners is winter—November to March. Students can learn a lot by attending the University classes. From Delhi, RISHIKESH is a night's journey by train and seven hours by comfortable State Bus Service. At Hardwar, change the train for Rishikesh. From the Station, the Ashram is about two miles—conveyances can be had.

(4) BOARDING AND LODGING facilities for all students, free of charge, if accommodation permits. Those who can afford, contribute their mite as donation to the Divine Mission or help the activities of the Society or publish books for wide circulation in English and other languages. Those who wish to stay here permanently, build their own cottages. No charge is levied for training in Yoga.

(5) DIPLOMAS AND DEGREES to well-trained students. They are authorized to carry on similar activities in various centres by starting Divine Life Society branches, Sivananda School of Yoga or Sivananda Ashram. They all get help and guidance from Sri Swami Sivananda Ji for their evolution through selfless service to mankind.

Here is a wonderful field to all seekers after Truth for promoting Peace, Bliss and Prosperity. Address all your letters to Sri Swami Sivananda, Sivanandanagar Post, U.P., India.

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